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VINDICIÆ CANTUS DOMINICI.

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IN TWO PARTS:

I. A DISCOURSE on the DUTY of SINGING the BOOK of PSALMS in SOLEMN WORSHIP.

II. A VINDICATION of the Doctrine taught in the preceding Discourse.

WITH

AN APPENDIX:

CONTAINING

ESSAYS AND OBSERVATIONS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

BY JOHN ANDERSON,

Minister of the Gospel at Mill-Creek and Harman's-Creek, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania.

Quæ carmina in templis Christianorum cani debent? Non illa ex sacris literis temere decerpta et male consuta, quibus garrula modulatione demulceri stultorum aures solent: sed ea quæ ipse suos Dominus docet: talia carmina sunt Psalmi a Spiritu sancto dictati.

Beza.

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PREFACE.

THE ſubject of the following pages, muſt appear deeply intereſting to every reader who conſiders the danger of admitting human devices into the worſhip of God. It is eſpecially with regard to His own worſhip that He is a jealous God, viſiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generations. The quarrels and offences occaſioned by the mixture of human inventions in the form of religious worſhip, ſeem to take up the greater part of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory; man's depraved nature being always fond of theſe inventions, and adverſe to the ſimplicity of divine inſtitutions.

The ſcheme of laying aſide the Book of Pſalms, as unſuitable for New Teſtament worſhip, and of ſubſtituting in its place hymns of human compoſition, has a manifeſt tendency to make men forget that the ſcriptures are writings, *ſui generis*, of a nature and kind abſolutely ſuperior to all other compoſitions. For we have been told, in order to bring down the inſpired forms of pſalmody to a level with ſuch as are merely human, that the words of the ſcriptures, when tranſlated, however exactly correſponding with the original, are not the words of the Holy Spirit; and that Chriſtians ought to expect the influence of the Spirit to aſſiſt

them

them in compoſing hymns to be ſung in ſolemn worſhip. There is indeed a ſaving work of the Holy Spirit, by which he brings perſons to the exerciſe of faith, love, and other graces, and to the performance of duty in a ſpiritual and acceptable manner. But that work is as diſtinct from the immediate inſpiration, under which the penmen of the ſcriptures wrote, as he buſineſs of gradually confirming any thing to be a ſtandard, is diſtinct from the making of that ſtandard.

The act of inſpiration, by which God communicated the ſcriptures to the church, was without any mixture of human frailty or imperfections. But even theſe works of beleivers, which are performed under the influence of the Holy Spirit, are ſtill their works, and as ſuch, partake of their imperfection. Hence it is evident, that though their communication with one another, concerning ſpiritual things, be good to the uſe of edifying; yet they are by no means to be held ſufficient to anſwer the peculiar purpoſe of one of the inſpired books, or to be admitted, in that view, as of the ſame kind.

The methods taken to promote the ſcheme now mentioned, ſeem to want that candour and conſiſtency which uſually characteriſe the defence of the truth. According to the advocates of this ſcheme, when we ſing the Book of Pſalms in ſolemn worſhip, we do not approach to God in the name of the Lord Jeſus; but countenance Arian blaſphemers, in with-holding from him the divine honours which are his due. And yet, after they have repreſented the ſinging of the Pſalms in ſuch an odious light, they tell the public, that they ſay little, and write leſs, againſt the miniſters and private Chriſtians who continue to ſing them. Nor do they themſelves ſcruple to comply with the condemned practice, occaſionally, or when the majority of a congregation is in its favour. It may well excite wonder, to ſee a miniſter who had vented his rage againſt the ſinging of the Pſalms, according to what he calls Rouſe's verſion both by the pulpit

pit and the press, continuing to give forth a part of the same reproached psalms on the Lord's day, to be sung in public worship.

We allow, that christian forbearance ought to be exercised in matters of private and personal concern, or in those of an indifferent nature; that the weak and ignorant ought to be borne with; while they are willing to learn; and that such ought to be first instructed in the easier parts of religious truth, and then in those that are more difficult.

But such cases are manifestly different, from that of a minister giving the public sanction of his example to a form of religious worship, which, according to his own judgment, excludes a due regard to the Mediator, and is long ago abrogated, as well as the practice of sacrificing.

If the singing of the psalms in solemn worship be such an evil as they represent it, surely it ought to be judicially condemned; it ought to have a principal place among the causes of humiliation; and such as refuse to be reclaimed from it, ought to be cast out of church-communion.

This was the downright honest way in which our reforming ancestors walked. That faithful General Assembly, which was held at Glasgow in the year 1638, did not content themselves with recommending the Presbyterian form of church government, and saying nothing against the Prelatical; but they asserted the former as authorised by the holy scriptures, and condemned the latter as contrary to them; and therefore to be avoided.

It is usual for error to be proposed at first indirectly; the teachers of it being for some time very cautious of making plain and explicit declarations of it. Hence the holy scriptures represent them as *creeping in unawares*, Jude 4.; and as *creeping into houses*, 2 Tim. iii. 6.; whereas the confessors of the truth consider it as

their indiſpenſable duty to ſet it forth in its native ſimplicity, by an open and expreſs aſſertion of it.

It is ſaid, that ſometimes, when the advocates for the new ſcheme of pſalmody meet with a perſon attached to the ancient practice of ſinging the inſpired pſalms, inſtead of bringing forth their ſcheme fully, and telling him candidly, that the Book of Pſalms is not fit to be ſung in New Teſtament worſhip, and that we may ourſelves make hymns much more proper for that purpoſe; they inſinuate, that we no more ſing the ſcripture-ſongs when we uſe Rouſe's verſion, than when we uſe that of Dr. Watts. There is ſo much diſingenuity in this aſſertion, that men of common honeſty, to be capable of it, muſt be amazingly under the influence of party ſpirit; while it is ſo manifeſt, that a cloſe adherence, both in matter and expreſſion, to the original, was intended in the verſion of the Pſalms uſed by the church of Scotland; while Dr. Watts profeſſed no ſuch deſign in compoſing his Imitation, and while their objections againſt ſinging the pſalms, are ſuch as would be as much againſt our ſinging them in the original Hebrew, as in any verſion whatever. They attempt to cover the impiety of the reproaches which they caſt upon that book, by pretending that they ſpeak againſt Rouſe's verſion only; which they repreſent as a human compoſition. But a literal verſion of the Pſalms cannot, conſiſtently with the reverence due to the holy ſcriptures, be called a human compoſition. For, though the turning of the book unto another language be human; yet the compoſition, (that is, the form of diſcourſe, the arrangement, the metaphors,* and other things, which are the ſame in the tranſlation, as in the original) is divine. Surely, theſe men are conſcious to themſelves,

* In order to avoid a captious criticiſm, it may be obſerved, that this enumeration is meant to be taken here, and in the following treatiſe, not diſtributively, but collectively.

themſelves, that they may as well term the proſe tranſlation of the Pſalms a human compoſition, as the verſe tranſlation of them uſed by the church of Scotland; nor will the fault, real or ſuppoſed, of the latter, rank it among human compoſitions, more than thoſe of the former.

Our opponents charge us with leaving out the goſpel, in our ſolemn praiſes; as if there were no goſpel in the Book of Pſalms:—with being ſtrenuous advocates for the worſhip of the Old Teſtament; as if the ſinging of the Pſalms were manifeſtly nothing elſe but an antiquated rite of the ceremonial law:—with rejecting New Teſtament light; as if no uſe could be made of that light in reading or ſinging the Old Teſtament ſcriptures:—with refuſing to praiſe God for new mercies; as if the application of the Pſalms to what God is now doing were abſurd and impoſſible:—with forbidding the exerciſe of a talent for poetry in the ſervice of religion; as if making hymns to be ſung in public worſhip, were the only way of exerting ſuch a talent to the edification of church-members.

Theſe charges ſeem rather to be taken for granted, than attempted to be proved by our opponents. Hence we have little reaſoning, and much declamation, in their writings on this ſubject. A great part, for example, of Mr. Latta's Diſcourſe on Pſalmody, is taken up in declaiming againſt his opponents, as overlooking, in their praiſes and thankſgivings to God, the great things which our Lord had ſaid or done in his own perſon, or by the miniſtry of the apoſtles; as allowing the goſpel no ſhare in their ſongs of praiſe and gratitude to God; as paſſing over in ſilence God's acts of mercy and kindneſs to themſelves; as conducting one great and leading part of their worſhip, without expreſſing an entire dependence, for acceptance with God, upon the mediation of his Son: while a reader, deſirous to know whether his opponents are indeed liable to ſuch charges,

looks

looks in vain through his performance for proofs; which ought to have been produced from their profeſſed principles or writings. A different method, it is hoped, will be found to be purſued in the following treatiſe. The writer has brought no charge againſt the abettors of the new ſcheme of pſalmody, but what he judges to have a ſufficient foundation in the words of their publications; which he has been careful to quote exactly. He can ſay ſincerely, that he has been ſtudious to avoid miſrepreſentations and perſonal reflections; faults, which, in his opinion, tend greatly to render controverſial writings endleſs and unprofitable.

The greater part of this treatiſe was formerly publiſhed; but it is hoped that, in this edition, the arguments for continuing to ſing the Book of Pſalms in ſolemn worſhip, are more diſtinctly ſtated and ſet in a clearer light.

With regard to the Appendix, conſiſting of Eſſays and Obſervations on various Subjects, the writer offers them to the public, not as containing new matter; but ſuch as appears neceſſary to be attended to in the preſent ſtate of the viſible church. When particular articles of Chriſt's truth, are much oppoſed, traduced or forgotten, an attempt to explain and defend them, muſt be ſeaſonable. Chriſtians ſhould often remind one another of thoſe things of Chriſt, which belong to the word of his patience.

The glory of Chriſt, as King in Zion, ſhines eminently in the particular form of church government which he hath inſtituted. He was honoured more eſpecially as a Prophet, by the Chriſtians who ſuffered under the perſecution of the heathens; and more eſpecially as a Prieſt, by thoſe who ſuffered under the Papacy; but the glory of his Kingly office was peculiarly diſplayed, by the teſtimony of thoſe who ſuffered in the laſt age, under Prelatical tyranny. The blood of an Argyle, of a Guthrie, a Cargil, a Cam-

a Cameron, a Renwick, is crying aloud, not only againſt abjured Epiſcopacy, but againſt the indifference of profeſſed Preſbyterians; the cold indifference which declines an expreſs aſſertion of the divine right of Preſbytery, as the only form of government warrantable in the church of Chriſt; and which pours contempt on the ſolemn covenant engagments which have been entered into for the ſupport of it.

That God, who hath choſen the fooliſh things of the world to confound the wiſe; the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; and baſe things of the world, and things which are deſpiſed, yea and things which are not, to bring to nought the things which are, may bleſs what is now offered to the public, and make it an effectual mean of removing the prejudices of ſome, and of eſtabliſhing the faith of others, is, through grace, the prayer of the writer,

JOHN ANDERSON.

June, 1800

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VINDICIÆ CANTUS DOMINICI.

PART I.

A Discourse on the Duty of Singing the Book of Psalms.

SINGING the praiſes of God is a moral duty, warranted by the precepts and examples of both the Old and New Teſtaments. *Let the word of Chriſt*, ſays one apoſtle, *dwell in you richly, in all wiſdom, teaching and admoniſhing one another in pſalms, hymns, and ſpiritual ſongs, ſinging with grace in your hearts to the Lord. Is any merry?* ſays another, *let him ſing pſalms.** Our Lord Jeſus, in the ſame night wherein he was betrayed, joined with his diſciples in ſinging a pſalm.† And we find Paul and Silas engaged in the ſame exerciſe at midnight.‡ Nor can it well be controverted, that ſinging has, in general, (whatever may have been the caſe for a time in ſome particular churches) had a place in the appointed worſhip of God, ſince

* Col. iii. 16. James v. 13.

† Matth. xxvi. 30. Many judicious commentators agree that, on this occaſion, our Lord and his diſciples ſung the great *Hallel*, which the Jews uſually ſung on the night of the Paſſover, conſiſting of ſix pſalms, that is, from the 113th to the 118th inclusive. That this was what Chriſt and his apoſtles ſung, is more probable than that it was a hymn of his own compoſing; becauſe not only he, but all the diſciples ſung it; and therefore it muſt have been what they were acquainted with: Beſides, if he had dictated a new hymn on this occaſion, who can think that the evangeliſts would have paſſed over ſo uncommon a circumſtance in ſilence?

‡ Acts xvi. 25.

ſince the days of David and Solomon. The purity of this ordinance is the more to be contended for, in regard that, of all the exerciſes of God's worſhip on earth, it bears the nearest reſemblance to the eternal exerciſe of the ſaints in heaven. Let us hold in juſt abhorrence the attempt of the Quakers to baniſh this and other ordinances of Chriſt out of the world. Let us deteſt the ungodly practice of thoſe who account it a mark of delicacy and good breeding, to ſit ſilent at church in the time of ſinging. And let us beware of encouraging the introduction of thoſe modes of ſinging, which, being too complex and artificial, tend to impoſe ſilence on a great part of our worſhipping aſſemblies.

On account of the controverſies that have riſen with regard to the right manner of conducting this part of religious worſhip, we propoſe, through divine aſſiſtance, to illuſtrate the following propoſitions:

I. That there are parts of the ſacred ſcriptures adapted to the purpoſe of ſinging in ſolemn worſhip, deſigned for the uſe of the church in all ſucceeding generations.

II. That the ſcripture-ſongs are the only forms of pſalmody which ought to be uſed in the ſolemn and public worſhip of the church.

III. That the ſinging in ſolemn and public worſhip ought to be conducted with decency and ſimplicity, in ſubſervience to the ſpiritual part, which is chiefly to be regarded.

We proceed to the conſideration of the FIRST PROPOSITION—

That there are parts of the ſacred ſcriptures adapted to the purpoſe of ſinging in ſolemn worſhip, deſigned for the uſe of the church in all ſucceeding generations.

WHAT we have to offer for explaining and confirming this propoſition, ſhall be comprehended under four obſervations.

The

The first is, *That there are portions of scripture peculiarly adapted to this part of divine worship.* To determine what these portions are, might have been a matter of difficulty, if it had been left to our judgment, to collect them from all the various books of the scripture: For, in that case, though these books be equally of divine inspiration, and might furnish abundant matter of praise, yet it could not be said of any of them, that it was given to the church by the Holy Spirit expressly for the purpose of being sung in solemn worship. But this may be said of those parts of scripture which are called songs, and more especially of that book which is distinguished in the New Testament by the title of *the Psalms.** Suitably to that purpose, the form of the psalms is manifestly poetical;† and the subjects of them the most proper to be sung of in divine worship; such as, the glorious excellencies of God, the salvation of the soul, the condition of the church, &c.

The second observation is, *That these psalms were given to the church as forms of psalmody, and not as patterns after which other forms were to be composed for being used in solemn worship.* Many of the psalms are expressly directed to the chief musician, to be immediately used in public worship. And this appears to have been the case even with those that have not this inscription; for in 1 Chron. xvi. 7. the 105th psalm, which wants this inscription, is said to have been *delivered by David into the hands of Asaph and his brethren.*‡ And in 2 Chron. xxix. 30. we read that Hezekiah the king, and the princes, commanded the Levites to sing praise unto

* Luke xxiv. 44.

† The author of an Examination of a Discourse on the Divine Ordinance of singing Psalms, page 13. asserts, that "The versi-"fication alone can essentially distinguish poetry from prose." If by versification he means what is commonly understood by that word, namely, a succession of lines, each of which consists of a certain number of feet or syllables, to his opinion may be opposed that of Dr. Blair, who says, "That poetry is the language of "passion, or of enlivened imagination, formed *most commonly* in-"to regular numbers." Hence he allows the denomination of poetry to the Telemachus of Fenelon, and the English translation of Ossian.

‡ Boston's Tractatus Stigmologicus, Part I. cap. 3.

unto the Lord with the words of David and Aſaph. Thus it is manifeſt, that the ſongs made uſe of in the ſolemn worſhip of the Jewiſh church were all along the very words of thoſe ſongs that had been given by divine inſpiration, and not ſongs compoſed by uninſpired men, in imitation of the inſpired ones.

The third obſervation is, *That the inſpired forms of pſalmody were given to be ſung in the public and ſolemn worſhip of the church, to the end of the world.* It may be ſafely laid down as a maxim, that whatever form of worſhip God hath appointed, ought to be obſerved till the end of time; unleſs he himſelf intimate, that it is only temporary, and to be abrogated at a certain period. It cannot be denied, that he once appointed his church to ſing his praiſe in the words of David and of Aſaph. And where have we any intimation of his will that the church ſhould ceaſe to do ſo before the end of time? The ceremonial inſtitutions, indeed, which were ſhadows of Chriſt as not yet come, ſuch as, ſacrifices, external purifications, the obſervation of meats and days, were abrogated when Chriſt was actually come, and the partition wall between Jews and Gentiles broken down: Some obſervances were ſuperſeded by other appointments of the church's Lawgiver coming in their place: Thus, circumciſion was ſuperſeded by baptiſm, the Sabbath of the ſeventh day of the week by the Sabbath of the firſt. But the uſe of the pſalms, either in reading or ſinging, can never be ſhewn to have been a typical ſervice, to have belonged to the partition wall between Jews and Gentiles;* or to have been ſuperſeded by

* Pſalm cxlv. 2. Mr. Henry obſerves, that the expreſſion here uſed by the pſalmiſt intimates, "That the pſalms he penned "ſhould be made uſe of in praiſing God by the church to the end "of time." We are far from laying ſtreſs on this, as on a principal argument; yet it ſeems no way diſagreeable to the ſignification of the word, to the connection of the place, or to the analogy of faith. The author of an Examination, &c. page 29. anſwers it with a ſneer; to which he adds, "Theſe indefinite terms "are frequently uſed in ſcripture in a limited ſenſe." Well, ſir, and what then?—Why then, *for ever and ever*, may mean no more than during the pſalmiſt's natural life, or during the Jewiſh economy. Is it then your opinion, ſir, that *praiſing the Lord for ever and ever*, means praiſing him during a man's natural life, or during the Jewiſh economy? It is hoped you will think otherwiſe in your cooler and more ſerious moments.

by any other inſtitution of Chriſt. While the pſalms are ſung in the public aſſemblies of the church, David, Aſaph and the other penmen, who ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt, ſtill continue to celebrate the praiſes of God in the church, as they ſometimes intimate they were to do, to the end of time. *I will praiſe thy name*, ſays David, *for ever and ever.**

OBJECTION. "The Jewiſh ſyſtem of pſalmody was exactly ſuited to the diſpenſation under which that people were placed, and many of the pſalms belonging to that ſyſtem have ſuch expreſs reference to the peculiarities of the Jewiſh worſhip—have thoſe ordinances of it which the apoſtle calls *worldly*, *weak*, *poor*, &c. ſo interwoven with their ſubject matter, that they cannot univerſally ſuit the goſpel diſpenſation, which is ſo widely different from the Jewiſh, and under which theſe ordinances are entirely aboliſhed. With what propriety can church members now call upon one another to praiſe God with the harp, the pſaltery, the timbrel, and dance, and to blow the trumpet in the new moon; when at the ſame time, they mean not at all to do any ſuch thing? Upon what principle can we intreat God to do good to Zion, with this declaration in our mouths, that there he would be pleaſed with whole burnt offerings and bullocks, which the church ſhould offer upon the altar? Under the Jewiſh diſpenſation ſuch offerings were proper—they were divine ordinances; and the pious worſhippers not only expreſſed them in words, but intended and actually performed them. "But

* The author of an Examination, &c. page 17. ſays, "Such "pſalms," thoſe, namely, which involve in them the ſubjection of thoſe who penned, or firſt ſung them, to the ceremonial law, "were as really a partition wall between Jews and Gentiles as "any other ordinance." Surely this is not that ſound ſpeech which cannot be condemned. It is a way of ſpeaking never heard of before in the church of God, that ſome of the pſalms were, as much as the practice of any of the Jewiſh rites or ceremonies, a partition wall, which Chriſt came to break down, Eph. ii. 14. Surely Chriſt did not come to deſtroy the ſcriptures, or any part of them, but to fulfil them, Matth. v. 17. As to the reaſons which led the author to ſo ſtrange an expreſſion, they are conſidered in the following pages.

" But no chriſtian believes, that he ſhould preſent ſuch of-
" ferings; or, if he did, they would be pleaſing to God.
" Can we conſiſtently ſay in our ſongs of praiſe, that ſpar-
" rows and ſwallows build by the altar of God, and that
" they are bleſſed who travel through the dry valley of Ba-
" ca, dig wells in it, and collect the rain in pools, to ſupply
" themſelves with drink, whilſt they are coming from a diſ-
" tant part of Judea, to celebrate the annual feſtivals at Je-
" ruſalem? Whilſt the Jewiſh economy laſted, this could
" be ſung with truth; but now it cannot. Theſe things
" exiſt no more. It muſt be very abſurd, if not a kind of
" mockery, to approach the Moſt High with expreſſions in
" our mouths to which we have either no meaning at all, or
" one very different from their obvious ſenſe, and that which
" they were intended originally to convey."

ANSWER. The ſinging of thoſe paſſages in the pſalms, which mention ſome peculiar uſages of the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, is ſuppoſed by the objector to be unſuitable to New Teſtament worſhip, either becauſe ſuch paſſages are obſcure; or becauſe the receiving of inſtruction by alluſions to thoſe uſages, and by metaphors taken from them, is among the carnal and worldly ordinances, among the weak and beggarly elements, to which chriſtians are not to return; or, laſtly, becauſe they are not applicable to the preſent condition of particular chriſtians, or of the church. Let us conſider each of theſe reaſons.

With reſpect to the firſt, a pſalm or hymn may be ſaid to be unſuitable for the uſe of ſuch as have not the capacity or information neceſſary to the underſtanding of it. Such an obſcure author as Perſius the ſatiriſt, would be very unſuitable for a boy who had learned only ſome rudiments of the Latin tongue, and had read nothing of the Roman hiſtory. In this reſpect, it cannot be pretended that the pſalms are more unſuitable under the New Teſtament diſpenſation, than they were under the Old: For it is obvious, that they may be more eaſily and fully underſtood with the light of the New Teſtament, than they could be without it.*

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* Perhaps ſome may object, That if our underſtanding the pſalms better than church members under the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, be allowed to warrant the ſinging of them in our ſolemn

With reſpect to the ſecond reaſon, it is juſtly denied, that the way of receiving inſtruction by alluſions to ceremonial uſages, or by metaphors taken from them, is among the carnal and worldly ordinances, the weak and beggarly elements, to which we are not to return. It is true, the ceremonial inſtitutions were carnal and worldly ordinances, and beggarly

lemn worſhip, the ſame reaſon might be urged for our obſervation of the ceremonial law. It is anſwered, that the writer of this diſcourſe is not here advancing an argument for the ſinging of the pſalms; he is only anſwering an objection, and ſhewing that the pretended obſcurity of the pſalms ought not to deter us from ſinging them. We have a far weightier reaſon againſt the preſent practice of the ceremonial law than the obſcurity of it; namely, that it now imports a denial of the Meſſiah as already come--a denial of chriſtianity. The author of a Diſcourſe on Pſalmody, page 93, 94. ſeems to reject the diſtinction between anſwering an objection and advancing an argument. Yet few diſtinctions are plainer. If you ſhew that a thing is not impracticable, you remove an objection; but you offer no proof of its lawfulneſs.

The author of an Examination, &c. page 43, 44, 45. inſtead of once attempting a ſerious reply to the reaſoning here uſed, endeavours to amuſe himſelf and his readers, by ſome criticiſms upon two ſimilies, which are omitted in this edition for the ſake of brevity, and which had been introduced, not to add any thing to the argument, but merely to make it plainer. The firſt was to this purpoſe: Suppoſe the following text, *Unto you that fear my name, the Sun of righeouſneſs ſhall ariſe with healing in his wings*, were propoſed to two perſons, one of whom had beheld the ſun ſhining in his ſtrength, and the other had never ſeen that majeſtic luminary, having only ſome ideas of its figure, motion, and beneficial influence; the text now recited, would be ſuitable for the inſtruction of both, yet it might be ſaid to be more ſuitable for that of the former. Here it was intended, that the particular text, quoted from the prophecy of Malachi, ſhould be conſidered as in the place of the pſalms; that the latter of the two perſons ſhould repreſent church members under the obſcurity of the Old Teſtament diſpenſation; and the former, church members under the New. Thus it was ſaid, that the book of pſalms, conſidered as a mean of inſtruction, could hardly be denied to be rather more ſuitable to the ſtate of the church under the New Teſtament, than it was to the ſtate of it under the Old. A better ſimile, perhaps, might have been found; the writer has nothing to ſay for it, but that it ſeemed to him proper; that he expected the reader would have gathered the deſign of it from its connection with what goes before and follows it; and that the examiner miſrepreſented it in

order

beggarly elements, when abſtracted from Chriſt; or as they were repreſented by the Judaiſing teachers, (againſt whom the apoſtle is diſputing when he uſes theſe expreſſions) that is, when the practice of any of them was repreſented as neceſſary to the juſtification of a ſinner before God, or when they were put in the place of, or ſomehow joined with, the righteouſneſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in the affair of juſtification. But in this view, they are repreſented as unprofitable things in the pſalms as well as in the epiſtles of Paul. To this purpoſe are theſe words of the 40th pſalm: *Sacrifice and offering thou didſt not deſire; mine ears haſt thou opened: Burnt offering and ſin offering haſt thou not required:* And theſe words in the 50th, *I will take no bullock out of thy houſe, nor he goats out of thy folds: Will I eat the fleſh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?* Theſe ceremonial uſages of the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, may alſo be ſaid to be *beggarly elements*, with regard

order to give it a diſtorted appearance. The other ſimile repreſented this expreſſion in the book of Job, *He hangeth the earth upon nothing*, as more ſuitable to the knowledge which has been attained in modern times, of the rotundity of the earth, than to the apprehenſions which prevailed among the ancients, with reſpect to its figure. Here the writer of the Diſcourſe was, perhaps, unguarded, becauſe he had often found the rotundity of the earth, and its ſuſpenſion in the air, put together, as relative ideas, in various authors. Le Clerc, in his Phyſics, ſpeaking of the obſervations of thoſe who had ſailed round the earth, ſays, "Hinc merito colle-"gerunt, terram eſſe rotundam, & veluti in ære, quo undequaque "ambitur, pendere." Another well known writer ſays, "While "the earth was conſidered as a plane, mankind had an obſcure "notion of its being ſupported like ſcaffolding, on pillars, though "they could not tell what ſupported theſe. But the figure of a "globe is much better adapted to motion." The author of the Examination, however, ſignifies, that there is no relation at all between thoſe two ideas; that the writer of the Diſcourſe on ſinging Pſalms, had repreſented the Divine Being as having hung the earth upon its ſpherical figure; that he had diſcovered about as much knowledge in philoſophy as in divinity; that the ſhift he made by repreſenting the above mentioned two ideas as ſuitable, and related to one another, had ſhewn his cauſe to be very deſperate.

What ſome readers may think of theſe accuſations, it is hard to ſay; but the writer, whom he accuſes, owns his inability to underſtand them.

regard to the obligation which the church was then under to the practice of them, and with regard to the scanty measure of gospel light, which was thereby communicated to the greater part of church members, compared with the abundant measure of that light enjoyed under the New Testament dispensation. But we utterly deny, that the way of receiving instruction by allusions to the ceremonial usages, or by metaphors taken from them, is a worldly ordinance, or beggarly element, quite unsuitable to the condition of the church under the New Testament dispensation. For those usages, as alluded to in the psalms, like the earthly things in our Lord's parables, are made use of, not to veil or darken, but to illustrate spiritual and heavenly things. That they actually do answer this purpose, is what a person needs not be told; who is diligent in the practical and believing use of the bible. One instance may be given, with regard to that most important gospel truth, that the sufferings and death of Christ are of a vicarious and satisfactory nature. A plain and striking argument for this truth arises from the declarations of scripture concerning the substitution of Jewish sacrifices in the place of the offerer. This argument cannot otherwise be evaded, than by denying the principle, that those sacrifices were designed by God to be shadows, and as exact representations of the use and end of Christ's death, as such earthly things could afford; a principle which is clearly established in the epistle to the Hebrews. For another instance, we may mention the very instructive and affecting manner, in which the ceremonial law, concerning the plague of leprosy, sets forth the abominable nature of sin, the symptoms of its power and dominion, the total destruction that it brings upon those who remain under its dominion, and the manner in which the remedy revealed in the gospel, is effectually applied. Farther, the method of conveying instruction by allusions to the ceremonial usages, or by metaphors taken from them, is not a beggarly element of the Old Testament; for the New abounds with examples of it, both with regard to Christ, as in these expressions, *Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: He gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour: Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus; by a new and living way which*

which he hath consecrated through the veil, that is to say, his flesh—and with regard to his church or people, *He is a Jew that is one inwardly: Peace be on the Israel of God: Ye are the circumcision: Ye are an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices: Ye are come unto mount Sion.* Indeed no allusions, metaphors, or similies, could be fitter for expressing and explaining the mysteries of the gospel, than those taken from the typical ordinances of the Old Testament; in which both the sign and the thing signified, are of God, and fitted to each other by his wisdom.*

The third reason why the objector holds the Psalms improper to be sung in our solemn worship, is, that a great part of them is not applicable to the present condition of particular christians, or of the church: This he seems chiefly to insist upon, and asks upon what principles we can sing such passages as those he mentions?

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* The author of an Examination, &c. page 47. represents what is contained in this paragraph as inconsistent with what we grant as to the comparative obscurity of the Old Testament. The injustice of this representation will appear, when it is considered, that what we admit on this head is to be understood of the Old Testament taken by itself. For, it seems easy to conceive, that, though the language and principles of a great work, consisting of two parts, be all along the same, and though the style of both be remarkable for perspicuity, yet persons may experience a degree of obscurity in reading the first part only, which they may find removed by reading both. This may be illustrated by an instance to which our author will hardly object: It is supposed, that the language and principles of his sermon on Psalmody, and his Examination, are the same; and that neither of them is obscure; yet some things really intended in his sermon will appear more plainly to be contained in it by reading both, than by reading his sermon only; such as, that the words of a translation of the scriptures, however exactly corresponding with the original, are not the words of the *Holy Spirit;* and that the grand medium of the communication of spiritual blessings was not discovered under the Old Testament. Thus, what we say about the obscurity of the Old Testament, may be reconciled with our saying that, in the Old Testament taken in connection with the New, the mysteries of the gospel may be clearly discerned. A little candid consideration makes the reconciliation perfectly easy, though passion and prejudice would make it as impossible as it is to "unite the opposite poles of the heavens, and to make the "same thing to be and not to be at the same time."

We anſwer candidly, that the principles we proceed upon in ſinging ſuch paſſages in the pſalms, are chiefly theſe two: Firſt, that, in this part of ſolemn worſhip, it is warrantable, to conſider many paſſages which we ſing as the words of others, and as expreſſive of their caſe, not of our own. Secondly, that ſome of theſe paſſages may be conſidered as examples of a common figure of ſpeech, whereby an individual, or particular, repreſents a whole ſpecies or kind.

If the firſt of theſe principles be falſe, then it is utterly unwarrantable to ſing any words which we cannot conſider as our own, and as expreſſive of our own caſe; and then it muſt have been always unwarrantable for a great part of church members to ſing ſuch words of the pſalms as theſe: *I have been young, and now I am old: Hitherto I have declared thy wondrous works: I have ſhewed thy ſtrength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come: I have more underſtanding than all my teachers: I underſtand more than the ancients: Whoſo privily ſlandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: Princes did ſit and ſpeak againſt me: Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, becauſe they keep not thy law: My zeal hath conſumed me: Seven times a day do I praiſe thee.* How could the Jews with propriety, according to the objection, in the time of the Babyloniſh captivity, or during the perſecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, call upon one another to praiſe God with organs, pſalteries and cymbals, or to bind their ſacrifices, while the peculiar ſervice of the temple was become quite impracticable?* So that if

* The author of an Examination, &c. page 52. ſays, "I grounded "ed the impropriety of ſinging the pſalms referred to, upon our "never intending to uſe theſe inſtruments, or offer theſe ſacrifi- "ces, at any time or place." But ſtill, ſir, this impropriety would be chargeable upon many of the Jews, if they ſung theſe pſalms in the period of the Babyloniſh captivity, as well as upon us now. For, in the beginning of that period, many who heard and believed the prophecy of Jeremiah with regard to the term of that captivity, could never intend to offer ſacrifice at any time or place, even as many as were then advanced in years, and could have no rational proſpect of ſeeing the temple rebuilt. It ſeems, however, needleſs, if not ſomewhat ridiculous, to inſiſt upon one particular inſtance in ſo plain a matter. There are multitudes of expreſſions in the pſalms, which no body can pretend that every church member, even under the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, could ſing, as

if this principle be not admitted, we will not be able to maintain, that the pſalms were exactly or univerſally ſuited to the ſtate of the church, even under the Old Teſtament diſpenſation. But ſurely it is to be admitted; for, as a learned and godly writer obſerves, "Why may we not ſing the "words of David and of Aſaph the ſeer, as well as the Le- "vites did in Hezekiah's days? Could they, and others that "joined with them in this exerciſe, ſay of themſelves what- "ever David ſaid of himſelf? If the diſpenſations of God "towards others of his children do not concern us, how are "we to underſtand theſe words of the 66th pſalm, *He turn- "ed the ſea into dry land; they went through the flood on foot, "there did we rejoice in him.* How could the pſalmiſt and "others in his time ſay, that they rejoiced at the Red Sea, "when the people of Iſrael were brought through it ſome "hundreds of years before he, or any of his contemporaries "were in being? And how is it that in the 15th chapter of "the Revelation, ſuch as had gotten victory over the beaſt "are ſaid to ſing the ſong of Moſes the ſervant of God. "The joyful or ſad condition of others being turned into a "ſong, may be matter of a ſong to us: Since we are mem- "bers of the ſame body, the favours and deliverances be- "ſtowed upon others ſhould be looked upon by us as favours "conferred upon ourſelves."*

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as expreſſing either what he had done or intended to do, at any time or place. Such, for example, as the following: *Upon the harp will I praiſe. I have done this evil* (namely, the particular ſin which David had committed in the matter of Uriah) *in thy ſight.' I will open my mouth in a parable: I will open my dark ſayings upon the harp. When I ſhall receive the congregation, I will judge uprightly: I will deſtroy all the wicked of the land, &c.*

* Brown's View of the Quaker's Religion. In the former edition of this diſcourſe was the following paſſage: "The words which we ſing are often to be conſidered not as ours, but as the words of the ſacred writer, or of ſome other. Sometimes we ſing the words of the church's enemies: *Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that ſo the name of Iſrael may be no more in remembrance.* Sometimes the words of the ſaints, declaring their great attainments, are in our mouths, though they may be far from being applicable to our preſent caſe; as when the pſalmiſt ſays, *My heart is fixed, O God; my heart is fixed. I underſtand more than the ancients.*" The author of an Examination, &c. page 49, 50.

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With reſpect to the ſecond principle on which we proceed in ſinging ſuch paſſages of the pſalms as the objector mentions, we obſerve, that there is hardly any figure of ſpeech more commonly uſed, than that by which an individual,

is chargeable with groſs miſrepreſentation in his remarks on this paſſage. He ſays, "That according to it we ſhould ſing the ſay-"ings of others profeſſedly as our own, though they ſhould be "ever ſo wicked; or that the worſhippers of God ſhould declare "in his preſence, that their heart is fixed, while it is wandering "and unſteady." It is amazing how he could put ſuch a conſtruction upon the paſſage which he had quoted, ſince the ſentence immediately before that which he quotes, declares, that, with regard to ſuch inſtances, the words which we ſing are to be conſidered, *not as our own*, but as the words of others. He repreſents the writer of that paſſage as following the example of Satan quoting ſcripture, in Mat. iv. 6. becauſe, in quoting the words of the church's enemies in the lxxxiii. pſalm, he had left out the words, *They have ſaid.* A little candor would have led the examiner to obſerve one difference between Satan's manner of quoting in the text referred to, and that quotation upon which he remarks: which is, that what is left out in the latter, is plainly implied and intended to be underſtood, but it is not ſo in the former. It is evident, that the examiner here proceeds upon his own principle, namely, that ſinging and praying are alike, except as to the manner of performance; and that our ſinging a paſſage does in itſelf imply, that we conſider it as applicable to our own caſe. He could not be ignorant, that the writer of the Diſcourſe was far from admitting ſuch a principle, as having declared his perſuaſion, that we are to conſider the words which we ſing as the words of the *Holy Spirit;* that we are to apply them to ourſelves as far as they are juſtly applicable to our own caſe; and that otherwiſe we are to ſing them, not as our own words, but as words given for our inſtruction.

It is ſuppoſed, that there are few readers who will not ſee the unfairneſs of imputing to the author of the Diſcourſe conſequences which only follow from principles which he had openly and utterly rejected.

Perhaps to ſome it may appear inconſiſtent, that the ſame words ſhould be conſidered as the words of the Holy Spirit, and alſo as the words of David and other ſaints; or as the words of the church or of her enemies. But this difficulty is removed by obſerving, that they are to be conſidered, principally as the words of the Holy Spirit, having been all dictated by him; and, ſecondarily, as the words of thoſe who penned them; and alſo of thoſe whoſe character and exerciſe is therein repreſented, with infallible certainty and preciſion.

vidual, or particular, is considered as representing the whole species or kind. *The stork in the heavens knoweth her appointed times, and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow observe the time of their coming;* that is, all the birds of each of these kinds are led by their several instincts to do so. By this figure, a particular thing is often made use of as the representative of a general, even with respect to times and places, in which the particular so employed does not exist. Thus, when the merciful providence of God turns wars into peace, it may still be said, *He breaks the bow, and burns the chariot in the fire;* though every one knows that neither bows nor chariots are now used in war. A people who enjoy the blessings of civil liberty, and of being governed by laws made by their own consent, may be said to sit, every *man under his vine and under his fig tree;* and little regard would be due to the frigid remark, that there is not a vine or a fig tree to be seen among them. Thus, it may be said of the author of a pathetic song or ode,

He wakes to extacy the living lyre;

though it be well known he never saw the musical instrument so called. Thus, the musical instruments mentioned by the psalmist, the harp, the psaltery, the timbrel, being, under the law, among the appointed means of praising the Lord, are to be considered as representing other means of praising him, such as the gifts and graces bestowed on church members. The bringing of offerings and whole burnt offerings, being, under the Old Testament dispensation, *one* appointed way in which church members were then to testify their faith and obedience, is sometimes employed to represent the other appointed ways of expressing their faith and obedience, such as prayer and thanksgiving. And whatever comfort and refreshment the Lord grants his people in attending on his ordinances, is represented by the particular comfortable refreshment that some of the people of Israel enjoyed in going from distant parts of the land to celebrate their annual solemnities, *who passing through the valley of Baca, make it a well; the rain also filling the pools.* To illustrate the application of this principle to the passages quoted in the objection a little more particularly, we observe, that a christian, suitably exercised in reading or singing the

150th

150th pſalm, in which men are called upon to praiſe the Lord with the pſaltery and harp, with the timbrel and dance, with ſtringed inſtruments and organs, and upon the high ſounding cymbals, will conſider, that the praiſe here meant is the indiſpenſable duty of all reaſonable creatures; and therefore it is not to be underſtood only of that mode of praiſing by the uſe of muſical inſtruments, which, after the time of David, appears to have been confined to the ſervice of the temple; and which we have reaſon to conſider as a ceremonial form of worſhip. He will therefore conclude, that the exerciſe, to which we are here called, is that of glorifying God with our bodies and ſpirits which are his; and that the pſalmiſt uſes ſuch an enumeration of particulars, and ſuch a vehemence of repetition, to ſignify that we are to praiſe him with all our heart, mind, ſoul and ſtrength.* With reſpect to the cloſe of the 51ſt pſalm, he will ſee, that the offerings and whole burnt offerings of bullocks, with which the Lord is ſaid to be pleaſed, cannot be underſtood of the outward rites merely, of which the pſalmiſt ſays in a foregoing verſe, *Thou deſireſt not ſacrifice; thou delighteſt not in burnt offerings.* He will therefore infer, that what the Lord was well pleaſed with in the bringing of offerings, and whole burnt-offerings, under the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, was (what is exceptable to him ſtill) the ſincere expreſſions of faith in Chriſt, and of obedience to him: And he will be aſſiſted by recollecting, that, in the New Teſtament, Chriſt is called *an altar*, and believers are ſaid to be *an holy prieſthood to offer up ſpiritual ſacrifices acceptable to God through Jeſus Chriſt.* Again, when he ſings theſe words in the 3d verſe of the 84th pſalm, *the ſparrow hath found an houſe, and the ſwallow a neſt, &c.* he will naturally be led to ſome ſuch meditation as this: Chriſt ſaith to his diſciples, *Fear not; ye are of more value than many ſparrows.* My King and my God ſupplies the wants of

* *Vos eſtis tuba, pſalterium, cythara, tympanum, organum et cymbala jubilationis bene ſonantia, quia conſonantia. Vos eſtis hæc omnia Nihil vile, nihil tranſitorium, nihil hic ludicrum vel lubricum; et quia ſapere ſecundum carnem mors eſt, omnis ſpiritus laudet Dominum.* That is, "Ye are the trumpet, the harp, the organ, and "the cymbals of joy, that are well ſounding, becauſe agreeing together. Nothing vile, tranſitory, ludicrous, or vain, is meant "here; and ſince it is death to be carnally minded, let every one "with the ſpirit praiſe the Lord." *Auguſtine on the place.*

of the ſparrow and the ſwallow; and will he not much more ſatisfy that ardent deſire of communion with himſelf in his ordinances, which he hath created in my ſoul? Farther, when he ſings of the bleſſedneſs of thoſe who, paſſing through the valley of Baca, make it a well, he bleſſes God for the refreſhment which he affords his people in their diligent attendance on him in his ordinances.

If it be ſtill inſiſted, that ſome things are left out in our application of ſuch paſſages, which was included in the application of them by church members under the Old Teſtament, we anſwer, that what repreſents a whole kind, is to be underſtood as applied to more or fewer of the particulars comprehended in that kind, according to the occaſion on which the application is made. Thus, it may be juſtly ſaid, that the people of God offer to him the evening and morning ſacrifice; though the word *ſacrifice* does not include, in its preſent application, all that might have been included in its application under the Old Teſtament. The truth is, if, in ſinging a pſalm or hymn, it be unwarrantable to leave out any thing in the application of it to our own caſe, which was included in the application of it when it was compoſed, then we can hardly ever find a pſalm or hymn which we may warrantably ſing: For how can we be ſure, that we apply the words ſung to all things to which they were at firſt applied in the mind of the compoſer? And if it be unwarrantable for perſons to ſing a pſalm, unleſs they include all things in their application of it, which any perſon ever did, or does include in the application of it, we may juſtly aſk, conſidering the variety of caſes and capacities among men, where ſhall we find pſalms which may be warrantably ſung by a whole family or congregation? On the other hand, if it be allowed, that we may ſing a hymn, applying the ſubſtance or principal import of it to ourſelves, though ſome things in a former application of it be left out; then why may we not ſing the paſſages of the pſalms mentioned in the objection, applying to ourſelves the ſubſtance or what was chiefly intended for the edification of the church and people of God, and ſetting aſide from our application what would imply the preſent practice of the ceremonial ſhadow?

OBJECTION. It is not denied, that we may ſing *ſome* of the pſalms, but that we may ſing them all; for "many of "them

" them so excellently express the exercises of a pious and " devout heart, and sublimely extol the Most High, with- " out any reference to the peculiarities of that dispensation " which is now abolished, that they contain matter proper " to be sung to the end of the world."

ANSWER. It is true, that some of the psalms may be more suitable to the present case of a person or people, than others. Some are more adapted to an afflicted condition, others to a prosperous one. Some may be called penitential, and others thanksgiving psalms. And persons are at liberty to fix on such of the psalms for their present use, as they find to be most applicable to their present case or frame of mind. But it does not follow, that some of the psalms may, and others may not be sung: For it is not unwarrantable to sing other psalms than those that are applicable to our present case. However small progress we have, as yet, made in true godliness, we ought not to decline singing the psalms which represent the high attainments of the saints recorded in scripture; and blessing God for all the grace bestowed on any of Adam's family. Though we seem to be in a comfortable condition, it may be profitable for us to sing the mournful strains of the psalmist, that we may be prepared for a day of trouble, and may know what temptations are common to the people of God. Nor are we to be deterred from singing the psalms which express the satisfaction of God's people in the execution of his wrath upon his and their finally impenitent enemies; though some, forgetting, that the words we sing are not our own, but the words of the Holy Ghost, mistake and reproach the exercise, as if we were therein cursing our personal enemies, or as if the Holy Spirit might dictate songs either under the Old or New Testament, breathing a spirit of revenge; a sort of songs which ought to be ascribed to him *who was a murderer from the beginning*.

The objector seems to insinuate, that " any reference to " the peculiarities of that dispensation which is now abol- " ished," is sufficient to render a psalm unfit for modern worship: for he represents the psalms that are now proper to be sung, as " without any reference to those peculiarities:" and thus, according to him, any reference to the peculiarities of the Old Testament dispensation, (though the language

of the New Teſtament abounds with ſuch references) is ſufficient to render a pſalm unfit to be ſung in our worſhip.

Error always loves to involve itſelf in ambiguous and indeterminate expreſſions. Thoſe that have ſpoken or written againſt the ſinging of the ſcripture pſalms, do not expreſly ſay which of them it is ſinful to uſe in New Teſtament worſhip. Surely they ought to have been explicit on this head and to have given us an expurgatory index of the condemned pſalms. For if the ſinging of ſome of the pſalms be a mere peculiarity of the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, like the offering of ſacrifices, or the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, then, to be ſure, we have much need to be well apprized which are, and which are not the abrogated pſalms. It is true, the Jewiſh converts were borne with for a while in their attachment to ſome of their old ceremonies. But it does not appear, that this indulgence was continued to any, after the canon of ſcripture was cloſed. So that, if the ſinging of the Old Teſtament ſongs be mere Judaiſm, it muſt now be a dangerous, nay, a pernicious cuſtom.

We now proceed to a fourth obſervation, which is, *That as verſe tranſlations are neceſſary for the uſe of churches in their ſolemn worſhip; ſo thoſe ought to be preferred that moſt exactly repreſent both the matter and form of the ſcripture ſongs.* Men may uſe whatever freedoms they judge proper with other books written in foreign languages, in order to adapt them to the taſte of the people for whom they are tranſlated; but ſuch freedoms are altogether illicit in tranſlating the holy ſcriptures. "The original text," to uſe the words of Mr. John Canne, to whom the lovers of the bible are indebted for his judicious marginal references, "ought to be tranſlated, as much as poſſible, even word for "word, without departing from the letter of the ſcripture "in the leaſt. For it is neceſſary to preſerve the letter "entire, how inconvenient, yea, how abſurd ſoever and "harſh it may ſeem to men's carnal reaſon; becauſe the "fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer than men. The ſcripture "metaphors muſt not be omitted, nor miſ tranſlated one "for another. Many words of ſcripture, which to ſome "may ſeem unfruitful, and afford not much matter in the "letter,

" letter; yet, according to the manifold wiſdom of God, " have an excellent meaning of the Spirit in them. The " original particles are ſo to be minded, and ſpecial notice " taken of them, as a thing of great concernment to ſhew " the connexion of text and context." Such are the principles upon which every tranſlation of the ſacred writings ought to be formed. It ought to repreſent, not merely the ſenſe, but the very words of the original. Not that we are to have any ſuperſtitious regard to one language above another, or to any ſet of ſounds or ſyllables; but, as we believe that the words of the ſacred writings were dictated by the Holy Spirit, ſo we believe that theſe words, having been choſen by infinite wiſdom, are the fitteſt and the beſt whether they be conſidered in relation to the things taught or in relation to thoſe whom they were deſigned to teach. Hence it follows, that of two tranſlations, of which the one is free, purpoſely repreſenting the ſenſe only, and the other literal, or, as much as poſſible, word for word, the latter ought, without heſitation, to be choſen; both becauſe the latter way of tranſlating bids faireſt to preſerve the whole ſenſe of the original, and becauſe it ſhews the moſt becoming regard to the choice which the wiſdom of God has made of words to expreſs what he has been pleaſed to reveal to us. A verſe tranſlation of the ſcripture-ſongs, deſigned for the uſe of the church in her ſolemn worſhip, ought to be formed upon the ſame principles. None of the original words ought to be neglected; the ſupplements ought to be few, and ſuch as are plainly implied in the original words. Such a verſe tranſlation will give us the ſcripture-ſongs entire; the ſame beginning and ending; the ſame order of ſentences, and of members of ſentences, as in the ſacred original. It is not the buſineſs of the tranſlator to think how he himſelf would chooſe to expreſs what he takes to be the ſenſe of the pſalmiſt, or how it may be accommodated to men's ſuppoſed refinement of taſte, or even to the ſtate of the church under the New Teſtament diſpenſation. It ought to be his only concern, that each word in the original may have an exactly correſponding word or phraſe in his tranſlation; its relation to the words going before and following being the ſame in both. Such a tranſlation will give us, not the words which man's wiſdom teacheth, but which the Holy

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ly Spirit teacheth. We do not say, that we have, or expect a verse translation absolutely faultless: but that such a one as adheres the most closely to the principles now laid down, is to be preferred, as giving us not only the matter but the words of the Holy Spirit.

OBJECTION. Still the form is merely human, unless we suppose the translator was inspired, when he versified the psalms, and that the Holy Spirit dictated to him the very phrases and measure of the verse.

ANSWER. The esteem of a translation of the scripture-songs according to the degree in which it corresponds, not only in the matter, but in the form, with the original, is a very different thing from pretending that it was made by immediate divine inspiration; its exactness being the fruit of learning, of assiduous application to the study of the holy scriptures, and of that assistance which the Lord ordinarily affords his people in whatever work he calls them to. It cannot be denied, that the mode of speaking, such as, affirmation, exhortation or prayer; the method, as it is pointed out by Mr. Henry, or any other judicious commentator; the metaphors and similies; the number of verses and members of verses, belong to the form of the psalms: And who will be so absurd as to say, that all these cannot, without inspiration, be preserved in a translation? All these, however, were divinely chosen; and whoever calls them merely human, cannot be free from the guilt of reproaching the divine word. There are some purposes which the original text alone can answer: Such as, those of correcting translations, of vindicating the true reading, and, in fine, of exhibiting the revelation which God hath given us in full perfection. But still it remains a truth, that so far, as the words of any translation are exactly answerable to those of the sacred original, they are as really the words of the Holy Ghost, as the Hebrew or Greek words; and are as profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and instruction in righteousness. With respect to the circumstance of the versification used for the conveniency of singing, it is by no means incompatible with a due care to retain the inspired form of the psalms as now described. Take the first psalm in the version authorized by the church of Scotland for an example. Whatever faults may be charged upon

on that tranſlation, they are not ſuch as ariſe from a deſigned neglect of the phraſeology of the ſacred original. Every part of it manifeſts a religious regard to the principles now laid down.

Objection. Is it not an ordinary practice of miniſters and private Chriſtians, in ſelecting a paſſage to be ſung on any occaſion, to take ſuch verſes of the pſalms as they judge to be ſuitable? Is not this much the ſame with what Dr. Watts has done in his Imitation? In this caſe, the form indeed is human, but the matter is divine.

Answer. With reſpect to the diſtinction beween matter and form, as applied to the preſent ſubject, it may be ſaid of any declaration of ſcripture truths, ſuch as the Weſtminſter Confeſſion of Faith, that the matter is divine; but of a paſſage of ſcripture exactly recited, that it is divine both in matter and form. In the Imitation now mentioned, there are ſuch tranſpoſitions and omiſſions of the matter of the pſalms, and ſuch a continual affectation of a ſtyle different from that of the pſalms, that it is quite obvious the author did not intend to retain their inſpired form. Miniſters or Chriſtians, in the caſe mentioned by the objector, take a pſalm, or part of a pſalm, which, as it was given by divine inſpiration, they judge to be ſuitable to the preſent occaſion. But this practice has no connexion with the attempt of Dr. Watts, to ſet aſide the whole book of pſalms, as it was given by divine inſpiration, from the public praiſes of the church, and to ſubſtitute in its place a number of hymns, in which the matter of the pſalms is left out, or admitted as the author thought fit. We do not ſay, that it is unlawful to write or read ſuch hymns; but that it is inconſiſtent with that peculiar eſtimation in which we ought to hold the word of God, to uſe them as a ſubſtitute for the book of pſalms; as if the declared deſign for which that book was given by the Holy Spirit, could be better anſwered by theſe hymns, than by the book itſelf.*

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* With what ſort of juſtice the author of a Diſcourſe on Pſalmody, page 102. pronounces the above illuſtration of the fourth obſervaton, "Bold aſſertion without reaſon or ſcripture," the candid reader is deſired, after a ſerious peruſal, to judge. When we read what he adds about the ſongs of Moſes and Deborah; as if he

The SECOND PROPOSITION.

That the ſcripture-ſongs are the only forms of pſalmody which ought to be uſed in the ſolemn and public worſhip of the church.*

THE FIRST ARGUMENT we ſhall offer in ſupport of the propoſition now laid down, proceeds upon this principle: *That all ways or means of worſhipping God, not appointed in his word, are to be rejected;* that is, *all ſuch as cannot be ſhewn, either by the expreſs words of ſcripture, or by a neceſſary conſequence ariſing from the words of it, to be divinely inſtituted. In vain,* ſaith God, *do they worſhip me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. Moſes was admoniſhed of God, when he was about to make the tabernacle: For ſee, ſaith he, that thou make all things according to the patter ſhewn thee in the mount.* We are to uſe as little freedor with the ſcriptural frame of inſtituted worſhip, as Moſ was to uſe with the pattern of the tabernacle. How can we ſuppoſe that a ſeemingly ſmall deviation is leſs dangerous in the latter than in the former caſe? The circumſtance of putting the ark in a new cart, ſeemed to be but a ſmall departure from the divine appoitment, by which the prieſts were to bear it upon their ſhoulders; yet we ſee how awfully that error was puniſhed by the death of Uzzah: An effecting example,

he meant to infer, that, becauſe theſe inſpired perſons did not adhere to the language of a hiſtory, when they were not tranſlating it, but only referring to it in a different ſort of compoſition; therefore thoſe who are uninſpired ſhould not adhere to the language of the ſacred poetry, when they are tranſlating it, and uſing the ſame ſort of compoſition; we wonder among what claſs of readers the author expected that this would paſs for argument.

* The author of an Examination, &c. page 23. ſays, "This propoſition, in reality, contains the main point in debate." But in page 48. he owns, that this is only a corollary to a previous propoſition, namely, that God hath given the ſcripture-ſongs to be ſung in the ſolemn worſhip of the church to the end of time; or in other words, that the ſinging of the ſcripture-ſongs is not abrogated under the New Teſtament diſpenſation. Now, the main point in debate is not the corollary, but the propoſition from which it follows.

mple, which teaches us, that men will not be able to excuse heir attachment to human devices in the worship of God, y alleging, as Uzzah might have done, that they meant well. They may expect to hear God saying to them, *Who hath required these things at your hand?*

But the singing of other compositions than those which the Holy Spirit hath given us in the scriptures, under the designation of psalms or songs, is a way or mean of worshipping God, not appointed in his word; there being no precept or example of the word, from which it can be justly inferred, that the Lord Christ ever appointed any other to be sung in the ordinary solemn worship of the church.

This is a native consequence of what was shewn under he former proposition, namely, that it is still the duty of the hurch to use that system of psalmody which was delivered ro the church under the Old Testament; and is further apparent from the inconclusiveness of the arguments which have been attempted to be drawn from some places of scripture, for the singing of other compositions in New Testament worship. The principal of these places we now propose to consider in answering the following exceptions.

Exception 1st. In Col. iii. 16. we are commanded not only to sing psalms, which is the name appropriated to the book of psalms, but also hymns and spiritual songs, which are conceived to mean other compositions as well as the psalms; compositions drawn from *the word of Christ*, a phrase which has a peculiar reference to the New Testament.

Answer. It does not necessarily follow from the circumstance of two other names being here used than that of psalms, that any other are here meant than what are found on the book so called. This may be illustrated by a similar example. The Old Testament is most commonly called the scripture, Mark xv. 28. John ii. 22. vii. 38. x. 35. Rom. iv. 3. ix. 17. x. 11. xi. 2. Gal. iv. 30. and the scriptures, Matth. xxi. 42. xxii. 29. xxvi. 54. John v. 39. Luke xxiv. 45. Acts xvii. 2. 11. xviii. 24. Yet the same Old Testament is meant by three several names taken from the parts of which it consists, Luke xxiv. 44. And he said unto them, *These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the*

the pſalms concerning me. It may farther be obſerved, that the whole Old Teſtament ſcripture is called, *the law*, John x. 34. xii. 34. xv. 25. 1 Cor. xiv. 21. yet it is alſo called, *the law and the prophets*, Matth. v. 17. vii. 12. xxii. 40. In like manner, the pſalms, in reſpect of the various matter and forms of compoſition to be found in them, may be called pſalms, hymns and ſpiritual ſongs, correſponding, as many have obſerved, with the three Hebrew titles of David's pſalms, *Mitſmorim*, *Tehillim*, *Shirim*. Theſe belong to the word of Chriſt; for the Old Teſtament is his word as well as the New: The former teſtifies of him, and was dictated by his Spirit, to be a perpetual rule to the church of God on earth, as well as the latter.* It is true, any article of divine truth may be called a word or ſaying of Chriſt; as, in the following text: *Whoſoever ſhall be aſhamed of me or my words in this adulterous generation, of him ſhall the ſon of man be aſhamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with his holy angels.*† Hence the words of Chriſt may be underſtood of ſome part of his doctrine, of which we are in danger of being aſhamed, on account of the reproach attending the profeſſion of it. But there is no reaſon to reſtrict the duty of having the word of Chriſt dwelling in us, to the ſcriptures of the New Teſtament: It was as much a duty before the New Teſtament was written, as it is now, Pſal. cxix. 11.

EXCEPTION 2d. In the fourteenth chapter of the firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians, the apoſtle mentions among the ſpiritual gifts of the Corinthians, that of dictating a pſalm to be ſung in public worſhip, (compare verſes 15 and 16) Now if Chriſtians ſhould ſing no compoſitions in the worſhip of God but thoſe contained in the book of pſalms uſed by the Jews, there would be no need, nay, there would be no room for a ſpiritual gift, i. e. extraordinary inſpiration, to enable them to propoſe a pſalm to be ſung in divine worſhip; for, upon this ſuppoſition every compoſition they ſhould uſe, was written for them long ago.

ANSWER. The words of the apoſtle are theſe, verſe 15. *I will pray with the ſpirit, and I will pray with the underſtanding alſo.* Verſe 26. *How is it then brethren? When ye come*

* John v. 39. 2 Pet. i. 19. † Mark viii. 38.

come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. We may observe, that the exercise here meant by *having a psalm*, considered in itself, must have been either extraordinary, as being the peculiar effect of immediate inspiration, or something of an ordinary nature, which may be ordinarily attained in the use of means.

1. If the having of a psalm was in itself extraordinary, as being the peculiar effect of immediate inspiration, an effect that could proceed from nothing else; such as *revelation*, one of the particulars here mentioned, undoubtedly was; in this case, even supposing that *the having of a psalm* signified the dictating of one to be sung in public worship, yet the objector's consequent, namely, that the gift of dictating psalms to be sung in public worship is still in the church, will by no means follow. We might as well plead, from the gift of foretelling future events by immediate revelation, then existing in the church, that the same gift exists in it still.

2. On the other hand, if the having of a psalm was in itself something of an ordinary nature, that may still be attained in the use of ordinary means, such as the having of a doctrine or interpretation cannot be denied to be, then there is nothing to hinder us from understanding the phrase in question, of the discerning and proposing such a psalm as was most exactly adapted to the state and exigence of the church; and that this might be the case, appears the more reasonable, if we consider, what divines generally allow, that the principal business of the prophets in the time of the apostles was to explain the prophecies of the Old Testament, and to shew the agreement thereof with the doctrine of the apostles and evangelists.* "But," says an objector, "there could be "no need, nay there could be room for a spiritual gift, *i. e.* "extraordinary inspiration, to enable them to propose a "psalm to be sung in divine worship." But why is there no need,

* Singulari sacrarum literarum peritia præditi, extraordinario Spiritus dono, antiquas prophetias interpretalantur, ea quæ facta narrabantur ab apostolis et evangelistis conferentes cum priscis vaticiniis, et ex iis ostendentes ita fieri debuisse. *Witsius de prophetis*, cap. xxi.

need, no room for a ſpiritual gift in the caſe? All the anſwer that can be given is, that ſuch an acquaintance with the pſalms, and ſuch a diſcernment of their meaning and ſuitableneſs to the ſtate of the church, as would be neceſſary for directing church members to a pſalm exactly ſuited to their preſent caſe, may be attained by the uſe of ordinary means. But it is plain, that, in this reſpect, there was as little need or room for a ſpiritual or extraordinary gift to enable them to have ſome of the other particulars here mentioned, ſuch as a doctrine or an interpretation. Nor is there any thing in the ſcope of the apoſtle here to hinder us from taking theſe words, *having a pſalm*, in the ſenſe now mentioned: ſince the diſorder which the apoſtle reproves would be the ſame, whether the pſalms they had were old or new. Beſides, it is highly proper to obſerve here, that the expreſſion *having a pſalm*, taken abſtractly, is not equivalent to that of dictating a new pſalm; becauſe when we have found, that there is nothing in the analogy of faith, or in the circumſtances of the text, requiring ſuch a particular interpretation, we ſhould then inquire, whether the preciſe grammatical ſignification of the words renders it neceſſary.

We only add here, that the uſe of an extraordinary ſpiritual gift in delivering a doctrine or an interpretation, or in ſelecting and propoſing a ſuitable pſalm, might anſwer the end of ſuch a gift; as, in theſe exerciſes, it afforded immediate and infallible direction, and this might ſerve both as a ſign for confirming the truth of Chriſtianity, and as a mean of ſupplying that light which was yet to ariſe from the completion of the canon of ſcripture.

EXCEPTION 3d. Inſpired forms of pſalms are not neceſſary under the New Teſtament diſpenſation, and therefore we are not to be confined to the ſinging of them in ſolemn worſhip. The gracious Saviour has provided and left us his word, and by the influences of his Spirit ſufficient furniture of light, gifts and graces, for all the parts of religious worſhip, without leaving a ſyſtem or liturgy, in the preciſe words of which we ſhould either pray, or praiſe, or preach.

ANSWER. The neceſſity of our uſing any thing as a mean of worſhipping God, ariſes from his own appointment: And therefore the ſuppoſition of our having ever ſo many other things which ſeem to us ſufficient to ſupply the place of that

that mean, can do nothing to prove that it is not neceſſary in point of duty; unleſs theſe other things were proved to be not only exiſting, but appointed to ſupply the place of that mean, and inconſiſtent with the continued uſe of it. Thus ſome are always declaiming on the importance of heart-religion, in order to diſſuade people from adhering to any particular form of worſhip or church-government: But all ſuch declamation muſt go for nothing with every ſerious inquirer, while a ſtedfaſt adherence to that particular form of worſhip and church-government, which God hath appointed in his word, inſtead of being inconſiſtent, is intimately connected with heart-religion. In like manner, our having the complete canon of ſcripture, and our being furniſhed with light, gifts and graces, are no way inconſiſtent with the ſinging of the ſcripture-ſongs in ſolemn worſhip; but rather ſerve to enable us to ſing them with more propriety and ſpiritual advantage.

On the principle of the exception, there was no neceſſity for an inſpired ſyſtem of pſalms even under the Old Teſtament: For church members, particularly ſuch as were employed in the public adminiſtration of holy things, might then, as well as now, by the light of the word and the aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit, which enabled them to teach and pray, have alſo compoſed pſalms or hymns for ſolemn worſhip, without that infallible direction and immediate inſpiration of God, which were peculiar to the penmen of the holy ſcriptures. Yet it does not appear, that any of them ever attempted to do ſo, or that, in ſuch an attempt, they would have been accepted of God, or approved of his church: For it is evident, that the ſongs given by inſpiration of the Spirit, were the only ſongs uſed in the worſhip of the Jewiſh church. Hezekiah might have directed the prieſts and Levites to compoſe hymns for themſelves, ſuitable to the time, if he had not been convinced, that they had no call from God to do ſo; and if he had not found a divine ſuitableneſs in the words of David and Aſaph, to the caſe of the church then, as well when they were written.

With reſpect to the uſe of a preciſe form of words, there is a manifeſt difference between the caſe of joint ſinging in ſolemn worſhip, and the caſes of prayer and preaching. There can be no joint ſinging without a preſcribed form of words;

words; but who will say, that a prescribed form of words is as necessary in preaching or joint prayer? We have produced a scripture example of the words of David and of Asaph being sung in the ordinary solemn worship of the church, hundreds of years after they were first delivered: But where have we a scripture example of praying or preaching, in the ordinary solemn worship of the church, by the mere repetition of a prescribed form of words? The gifts requisite to public preaching, such as, an ability to divide the word rightly, aptness to teach, &c. shew that preaching must be something else than the mere repetition of a form of words. Accordingly, the Lord promises to give his people pastors who shall feed them with knowledge and understanding.* In like manner, with respect to prayer, the assistance of the Holy Spirit is promised in this more particularly and expressly, than in other duties: so that we have ground to hope that he will direct us to right matter, to suitable petitions and arguments, as well as to the right manner of praying.† But where have we a precept or promise to direct or encourage the ordinary office-bearers or other members of the church, to compose psalms or hymns to be sung, instead of the inspired forms of psalms and hymns, in the ordinary solemn worship of the church?‡

Those

* 2 Tim. ii. 15. Titus i. 9. Jer. iii. 19.

† Zech. xii. 10. Rom. viii. 26.

‡ This paragraph has been represented as wide of the mark; as it does not prove the necessity of an inspired form of praise in the New Testament worship: But if the passage quoted from a Sermon on the Duty of Praise, had any colour of argument against that necessity, it must have been to this purpose; That, as the furniture which Christ affords his church, renders an inspired form of words unnecessary in prayer and preaching, it does so also in singing praise. In this case, to point out the difference between the exercise of praying or preaching, and that of singing, and to shew that it is quite unfair to reason from the former to the latter, with respect to the necessity of an inspired form of words, was, one should think, to hit the mark. It was impertinent to class prayer and preaching with singing, if he did not mean to represent them as alike with respect to the matter in question. But, perhaps, the author is only practising the stratagem of some birds, who, when you come near their nest, fly away to a considerable distance from it, in order to draw you from the place.

Thoſe who plead for the uſe of ſet forms of prayer in public worſhip, attempt to argue for them from the uſe of ſuch forms in ſinging. But there is a ſpecific difference between prayer and ſinging. We allow that reading or ſinging the word of God ought to be accompanied with inward or ejaculatory prayer, ſuitable to what is read or ſung. But it no more follows that ſinging is prayer, than that reading is ſo: And if ſinging in ſolemn worſhip, and prayer, were the ſame as to the ſubject matter, and differed only *in the manner of performance*, then, the ſinging of a pſalm or hymn, in which there is no direct addreſs to God, no petition, confeſſion or thankſgiving, and conſequently no prayer, (as in the firſt and ſecond, and ſeveral other pſalms) would properly be no ſinging at all; a ſuppoſition as abſurd as it is contrary to the ſcripture, and the ſenſe of the Chriſtian church. Joint ſinging in ſolemn worſhip ſeems to be rather an expreſſion of our joint acquieſcence in the matter ſung, as a ſubject of inſtructive and believing meditation, than what is, properly ſpeaking, joint prayer. Hence our pious anceſtors in Britain, juſtly complained of the cuſtom in ſome Engliſh cathedrals of ſinging their prayers. It may be added, that it is no ſmall preſumption againſt the practice of praying by ſet forms, that the pſalms which, of all the parts of ſcripture, have moſt the appearance of ſuch forms, are given to the church for another purpoſe.

The SECOND ARGUMENT which we offer, for our ſinging no other than the ſcripture-pſalms in ſolemn worſhip, proceeds upon this principle, *That if the inſpired pſalms be of a ſufficient number and variety, no other ought to be ſung in ſolemn worſhip.* By the number and variety of the pſalms being ſufficient, we mean, that we do not need a greater number or variety, even in the preſent ſtate of the church, for attaining the ends for which this part of ſolemn worſhip was appointed; particularly, for expreſſing our ſenſe of the Lord's wiſdom, power, holineſs, juſtice, goodneſs and truth, in his way of dealing with the church and her members; and for encouraging ourſelves and one another in a ſtedfaſt adherence to truth and duty; and for promoting ſpiritual affections, ſuch as, holy admiration of the glori-

ous excellencies and works of God, joy in his salvation, and godly sorrow for sin.

We ought, therefore, to introduce no other psalms into our singing in solemn worship; because the introduction of other forms of psalms than what are necessary for the ends now mentioned, is not requisite in order to a single and acceptable observation of this divine ordinance, however it may gratify humour or vain curiosity.

But the diligent perusal of the psalms given by divine inspiration, together with the past experience of the people of God, may well convince us, that no more forms of psalmody are necessary, even in the present state of the church, for our attainment of the ends now mentioned. Such is the variety of matter in the book of psalms, that there is no article of scripture doctrine, which they do not, implicitly at least, contain; no gracious exercise or experience of a believer in his various personal trials and deliverances, which they do not exemplify: and with regard to true patriotism, or zeal for the church's welfare, the purest spirit of it breathes in the psalms.*

EXCEPTION 1st. "Those scriptures which teach us to "pray and praise, and indeed to do all our acts of religious "worship in the name of the Lord Jesus, in such a manner "as our Lord himself expressly tells his disciples they "had never done before, most evidently shew us, that christians should not confine themselves to the forms of worship used under the former dispensation; but that, in "prayer, praise, &c. they should have, according to the "light and fulness of the gospel, a more express reference "to the name, the person and offices of the Lord Jesus "Christ, than is to be found in any discoveries or "compositions under the law. If we confine ourselves "to the psalms of David, we shall exclude from our songs "of praise the distinguishing glories of the gospel, and still "hold the veil upon the lovely face of the Redeemer; we "shall ungratefully reject the light, and resolutely continue "in the obscurity of the former dispensation. All this is "evident from the following scriptures: *And whatsoever ye "shall ask in my name*, saith the Saviour, that will I do, that the

* Psalm cxxxvii. 5, 6.

" the Father may be *glorified in the Son.* And again, *Veri-*
" *ly, I ſay unto you, whatſoever ye ſhall aſk the Father in my*
" *name, he will give it you: Hitherto ye have aſked nothing*
" *in my name: Aſk, and ye ſhall receive, that your joy may*
" *be full. The time cometh, when I ſhall no more ſpeak to*
" *you in parables; but ſhall ſhew you plainly of the Father.*
" *At that day ye ſhall aſk in my name.* Theſe are remarka-
" ble paſſages, declaring the duty and the privilege of chriſ-
" tians beyond what was diſcovered to the Jews, or even
" to Chriſt's own diſciples before that time—This was
" the caſe in the Jewiſh worſhip, and is ſo ſtill."

ANSWER I. If it be allowed that there is in the pſalms *a real* reference to the name,* that is, to the perſon and offices of Jeſus Chriſt, as the only way of acceſs to, and acceptance with

* In the former edition of this Diſcourſe, it had been ſaid, that it is unjuſt to repreſent the Old Teſtament church as making no uſe of the name of Chriſt in their prayers or praiſes. The author of an Examination, &c. page 78. replies, " There is no ſuch " expreſſion, nor any from which it can be inferred, in the whole " of my ſermon. That glorious perſon is frequently ſpoken of in " the Old Teſtament, &c. But I did repreſent, and do now ſay, " that there is not a prayer or ſong of praiſe recorded in the Old " Teſtament, which explicitly leads to God through Chriſt, in " ſuch views of, and dependence on him, as the New Teſtament " directs." An attentive reader muſt be ſenſible of unfair dealing here, in two reſpects: Firſt, in inſinuating, that, by the phraſe, *making uſe of the name of Chriſt in prayer or praiſe*, ſomething elſe might be meant than *coming to God through Chriſt*: whereas, it is plain from the ſcope of the paragraph, that nothing elſe could be meant; and therefore, his charge of miſrepreſentation muſt be groundleſs Secondly, in obſcuring the true ſtate of the queſtion, or rather departing from it, by uſing the word *explicitly*. Now, the queſtion is not, whether the Old Teſtament is as explicit as the New in leading us to God through Chriſt? But, whether it as *really* and *certainly* leads us to God through him? And whether it is not neceſſary to underſtand it as doing ſo, particularly in all the prayers and praiſes of the ſaints recorded in it? For, if Chriſt be as really and neceſſarily to be ſuppoſed and underſtood as the ground of acceſs to, and acceptance with God, in the prayers and praiſes of the Old Teſtament, as in thoſe of the New, then there is no real or ſubſtantial difference between them in this reſpect. The ſcripture teaches not only what is declared in expreſs words, but alſo whatever is implied or contained in the expreſs words.

with God, as well as in the New Teſtament; then is the doctrine of the pſalms in reality the ſame with that of the New Teſtament. The revelation being *more clear* or *expreſs* in the latter than in the former, makes no difference in the matter revealed. Upon this ſuppoſition, the ſcriptures, which teach us to pray, praiſe, and do all our acts of worſhip in the name of the Lord Jeſus, are nothing againſt our adherence to the ſcripture-forms of pſalmody; becauſe, in theſe, the reference to the perſon and offices of Chriſt is as real and conſtantly ſuppoſed and proceeded upon in the Old as in the New Teſtament: And therefore the paſſages of the New Teſtament quoted in the exception, being perfectly agreeable to what is *really*, though not always ſo expreſly, contained in the pſalms, teach us how to ſing them with underſtanding and ſpiritual profit. It is evident then, that if it be allowed, that by the ſcripture-forms of pſalmody we *really* praiſe God in the name of the Lord Jeſus, it cannot be argued from the texts that teach us to do all our acts of worſhip in his name, that other forms of pſalmody are neceſſary, as if our worſhip, in ſinging the ſcripture-ſongs, had no reference to the name of Chriſt. The reaſoning of the exception, therefore, is either not to the purpoſe, or it ſuppoſes that there was no reference at all to the name of Chriſt in the forms of pſalmody, prayers, and other worſhip of the church under the Old Teſtament. But if there was no reference to his name in their worſhip, it was not for want of a revelation of it: For we are aſſured, in the 10th chapter of the Acts, and 43d verſe, *That to him give all the prophets witneſs, that, through his name, whoſoever believeth on him, ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins.* Surely the witneſs or teſtimony of the prophets concerning Chriſt, neceſſarily implies in it their declaration of his name: And the Old Teſtament ſaints, whoſe faith undoubtedly correſponded with the teſtimony of the prophets, muſt have known and believed, that they would receive the forgiveneſs of ſins through his name; and conſequently that, through his name, their perſons, prayers, praiſes, gracious deſires, reſolutions and aims at walking in the way of duty, would all be accepted with God. Accordingly, the prophets are very particular in declaring his name. See, among other places, Iſaiah ix. 6. *His name ſhall be called Wonderful Counſellor, the Mighty God,*

God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Jer. xxiii. 6. *This is his name whereby he shall be called,* THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Zech. vi. 12. *Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts, saying, Behold, the man whose name is* THE BRANCH. We find the saints expressly pleading upon his name: *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer: Cause thy face to shine on thy sanctuary for the Lord's sake: Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.** The names by which Christ is called in the psalms, the Redeemer, the anointed one of Jehovah, the Man of God's right hand, the Priest ordained by the oath of Jehovah, the King and Shepherd of his people, are entirely in the language of the New Testament. Hence it appears, that the writer, from whom the words of this exception are quoted, has fallen, perhaps inadvertently, into a gross impropriety, when he says, "This was the case of "the Jewish worship, and is so still;" a way of speaking which would lead us to form our judgment of the worship of the church of God, under the Old Testament, from the superstitious and ridiculous worship of the modern Jews.

With respect to our Saviour's words, *Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name,* it is necessary to observe, that in scripture negative expressions are often to be understood comparatively; as when it is said, *By my name* JEHOVAH *was I not known to them: I will have mercy and not sacrifice: We wrestle not against flesh and blood: We are of yesterday, and know nothing.* The passage now adduced may be understood in the same manner; that is, as if our Saviour had said to his disciples, Ye have not asked largely and with the full assurance of faith, as my name warrants you to ask. It does not seem to be so much his design to charge them with not making use of his name, as with being too scanty in their asking: Hence the words, *in my name,* are not repeated, though they are certainly understood, in the following part of the verse—*Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full:* for it is natural to suppose, that he repeats that which he chiefly intended. But even supposing the emphasis

* Psalm xix. 14. lxxxiv. 9.

emphasis to be laid on the words *in my name*, the expression must still be understood comparatively; as intimating that they had not attained such clear and distinct views of the Redeemer's name, as were necessary to make them ask with that boldness and confidence which they had ground for in his name. To suppose that this expression means, that the disciples before this time were quite ignorant of his name, and made no use of it in prayer as the ground of their access to, and acceptance with God, is quite inconsistent with all those texts which declare, that the disciples, while they followed him in his humiliation, had a saving knowledge of him as the CHRIST, the Son of the living God.*

The truth is, however small we suppose the light of believers under the Old Testament dispensation, or of the disciples of Christ before his death, we must allow that they had a real and saving knowledge of Christ's name, as that by which alone there could be any acceptable drawing near to God. This they were taught by the first promise, by all the prophets, by the ceremonial law, and, particularly, by the mercy-seat. Without admitting this, we must either suppose, that they came to God in some other way than by Christ, or that they could come unto God by him without the knowledge of his name: And then we will necessarily be led into the opinion, of salvation being attainable by heathens who never heard of his name; an opinion that manifestly tends to the subversion of Christianity.†

2. We

* A pretended examiner affects to make short work with what is here said concerning our Lord's words, quoted in the exception, by observing, that "the dispute of the writer of this paragraph "is with the Saviour." But candid readers will allow that he came too soon to this conclusion: He ought first to have shewn, either that the remark about the use of negative expressions in scripture is false, or that it is misapplied here.

† "I observe, that they who hold that ancient Israel had little "hope of eternal life, and no ground for such hope by God's word "or promise, do generally incline to think favourably of those they "call virtuous heathens; and their wanting this hope and good "grounds for it, and the want of its influence in their heart and "practice, was not such an essential defect in the religion of the "heathens, but that without it they might attain to the pleasing "of God, and to future happiness. Whatever arguments be used to "guard

2. We are to guard againſt meaſuring (as the exception would lead us to do) what is contained in the Old Teſtament by the actual attainments of church members under that diſpenſation. We allow that the Old Teſtament ſcriptures were ſuitable to the condition of the Old Teſtament church, and to the attainments of her members: But not to them *only*; but alſo to the condition and attainments of the New Teſtament church, and her members. The apoſtle declares, concerning all ſcripture given by inſpiration of God, that *it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and inſtruction in righteouſneſs*. God never gave any part of his word but for the ſpiritual profiting of his people in all future generations. With reſpect to the pſalms particularly, though they were, no doubt, adapted to the ſolemn praiſes of the Old Teſtament church and her members, yet it does not follow that they are not adapted to the New Teſtament church and her members; becauſe the object of the church's praiſe is the ſame yeſterday to-day and for ever; becauſe the church had the ſame benefits to ſing of, either as paſt or to come; becauſe God's former dealings with his church and people are a pattern and counterpart of his after-dealings with them; and becauſe the exerciſes of the ſaints repreſented in the pſalms, are to be conſidered as a mould for the exerciſes of God's people in all ſucceeding generations.

3. We ought to diſtinguiſh between the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament taken by themſelves, and the ſame ſcriptures taken in connexion with the New Teſtament. In reading the whole of the Old Teſtament, and particularly in ſinging the pſalms, we are to make uſe of the light of the New. By this light we diſcover not only Chriſt Jeſus, as the great object of which the Old Teſtament ſcriptures teſtify; but alſo

"guard againſt the conſequence of theſe ſentiments, yet their "tendency is, and their conſequence will commonly be, with "thoſe who receive them, however there is ſet before themſelves "the revelation and promiſe of eternal life, that they will be led "by ſuch notions to think (what the carnality of men's hearts is "otherwiſe prone to) that the way to the kingdom of heaven is "more eaſy than it is indeed." *The Scripture Doctrine of Sanctification, by Mr. James Frazer, of Pitcalzain*, page 262, 263.

alſo the inimitable excellence of the form of thoſe ſcriptures, as delivered by divine inſpiration.

EXCEPTION 2d. Let us ſuppoſe a perſon, who knew not what religion we profeſſed, were to come into our worſhipping aſſemblies week after week, year after year, and hear our ſongs of praiſe; would he by them learn the word of Chriſt, which the appoſtle enjoins us to teach, particularly in our praiſes? Or rather would he not, from this part of our religious ſervices, form the ſame opinion of us that he would of an aſſembly of worſhipping Jews?

ANSWER. We have already ſhewn, that the diſtinction between the Old and New Teſtament diſpenſation, does not lie in the forms of pſalmody to be uſed in ſolemn worſhip; the Holy Spirit having given us a ſyſtem of them in the Old Teſtament, deſigned for the uſe of the church till the end of the world. If the modern Jews, and other heretics, abuſe the pſalms, as they do the other ſcriptures, we are not on that account to be deterred from the right uſe of them. As to that part of the exception which reſpects the teaching of the word of Chriſt, though we receive inſtruction in ſinging, as well as in prayer, yet ſinging and teaching, formally conſidered, are to be diſtinguiſhed.* Our ſinging in ſolemn worſhip, ſuppoſes that we are already ſomewhat inſtructed in the firſt principles of our holy religion: For we can never *ſing praiſes with underſtanding*, unleſs we have ſome previous acquaintance

* Agreeably to what is here ſaid, the author of a Sermon on Pſalmody obſerves, that reading and ſinging are diſtinct ordinances. "In ſinging praiſes," ſays he, "God is the immediate "object, and the primary end is to celebrate his ſupreme glory "and perfection, in himſelf and in his works and ways; in reading, "the primary end is inſtruction and edification." Theſe words ſufficiently anſwers the exception here under conſideration. Yet they are not inconſiſtent with the truth of this propoſition, That if the ſinging of thoſe parts of ſcripture which were given to be ſung, be improper, the reading of them in the way of ſolemn worſhip muſt be ſo too: For the obſcurity, Judaiſm, &c. of the pſalms, muſt hinder the edification of church members in the latter as well as in the former. It is true, that reading and ſinging have each of them ſomething peculiar to itſelf; but the objections againſt the public ſinging of the pſalms reſpects what is common to both. For example, both ſhould be accommodated to the capacities of church members, and to the goſpel diſpenſation.

acquaintance with the subject and grounds of them. Though the apostle exhorts christians that were of some standing in the church, to *teach and admonish one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs*, he does not say that such singing is the proper way of beginning the instruction of a person who is grosly ignorant. The proposal, therefore, of teaching a stranger the word of Christ by public singing only, is absurd; since he can hardly be expected to profit by this without the previous use of other means. Indeed, neither strangers, nor even such as are brought up among ourselves, will rightly understand the public ordinances, or attain the ends of them, while they allow themselves in the neglect of the secret reading of the scriptures and secret prayer, of family worship and family catechising. On account of the carelessness of church members in these respects, they have reason to tremble at the threatening which God pronounces against such as are barren in his vineyard.

The THIRD ARGUMENT for the exclusive use of the scripture-songs in the solemn praises of the church, proceeds upon this principle; *That such is the superior excellence of the scripture-songs, that no other can justly be considered as equal to them, or sufficient to answer the same purposes.* "Let "the writings of men contain ever so many valuable truths, "we are not ashamed to declare, that never man spake like "God."*

No other forms of psalmody can approve themselves to the spiritual taste of christians like the scripture-songs. For the truths of God's word (though always sweet to the renewed taste) are like water, which is said to be sweetest when drunk immediately out of the fountain. There is an authority, a majesty, a spiritual savour, a richness in the words of the Holy Spirit, which it is in vain to expect in any other.

Besides, we have the best ground to look up to God for his special blessing upon the words, which, by his immediate inspiration, he hath put into our mouths; and to trust that they will prove a vehicle or mean of conveying the quickening and refreshing influences of the Holy Spirit to our souls. It consists with the experience of God's people, that the

* Declaration and Testimony, by the Associate Presbytery of Pennsylvania, part iii. art. 6.

the Holy Spirit usually gives them the most sensible relief, and effectual counsel and comfort, by bringing to their remembrance, by opening and applying his own words. But what reason have we to expect that he will co-operate with men's words, introduced into that place which he hath appointed his own words to occupy?

Here we are told, that we may as well plead the excellence of the words of scripture for our using no other words in praying or preaching, than those of the prayers and discourses recorded in scripture. But we have already pointed out the difference between the exercises of prayer and preaching and that of singing: We may only observe here, that, in order to give this objection any force, it must be necessary to shew, that the suitable performance of the duties of prayer and preaching requires the use of a set form, as much as public and joint singing does; and that God hath given us a book of sermons by which to preach, or a book of prayers by which to pray, as he hath given us a book of psalms by which to sing. What we insist upon is, not that inspired forms should be used in those religious exercises in which no forms are necessary; but that, in any exercise wherein some forms, either humanly devised or inspired, must necessarily be used, the inspired forms, on account of their divine authority and excellence, ought to be preferred.

The LAST ARGUMENT we offer, arises from *the dangerous consequences of the new scheme of using other than the scripture-songs in solemn worship.* The advocates for this scheme profess that they have a great esteem and veneration for the scripture-songs, and that all they plead for is the lawfulness of using human compositures in conjunction with them. But it is manifest, that the use of such compositures, once introduced into solemn worship, tends to exclude the scripture-songs altogether. Accustomed to other forms of psalmody in solemn worship, people will gradually have less relish for the scripture-songs, and less disposition even to read or meditate on them. Thus, the worshipping of saints, having been introduced into the church of Rome, supplanted in a great measure the worship of God, to which it was at first considered only as a consistent and subordinate addition.

Further,

Further, the advocates for the uſe of human compoſures in the public praiſes of the church, have been led to ſpeak blaſphemouſly of the ſcripture-ſongs, calling them Jewiſh pſalms, curſing pſalms, and the like; and alſo to diſparage the whole Old Teſtament, teaching that it does not direct periſhing ſinners to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt as the only way of their acceſs to, and acceptance with God, or to make uſe of his name as their great plea with God; and that the New Teſtament alone (and conſequently not the Old) declares the worſhip and ordinances which the King and Head of the church hath appointed for his followers now.* Such tenets uſed to be ſtigmatiſed in the proteſtant churches as belonging to the Socinian ſyſtem.† Indeed they accord well with the blaſphemous

* A Sermon on Pſalmody, page 15. 35.

† The following extract from the work of a Dutch divine, who flouriſhed in the beginning of the preſent century, may ſatisfy the reader of the truth of what is here aſſerted; the book being only a ſhort view of the common doctrine of the proteſtant churches. *Perperam Sociniani Volunt*, &c. "The Socinians erroneouſly hold, that the following things were added under the New Teſtament: 1. The worſhip of the Son; though it was expreſly enjoined under the Old Teſtament, Pſalm ii. 12. *Kiſs the Son;* and exerciſed, Gen. xlviii. 6. *The Angel who redeemed me from all evil*, &c. 2. The worſhip of the Father in the Son as Mediator; which was alſo enjoined under that diſpenſation; faith in the Meſſiah being preſcribed, Hab. ii. 3 *The juſt by his faith ſhall live;* and exerciſed, Pſalm lxxx. 16, 18. *Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the Son of man whom thou madeſt ſtrong for thyſelf.* Dan. ix. 17. *For the Lord's ſake.* 3. The duty of praying; which was enjoined, Pſal. l. 15. *Call upon me in the day of trouble;* and exerciſed by all the ſaints. 4. That form of prayer which Chriſt taught his diſciples, commonly called, the Lord's Prayer; which is no new duty, but only a help in diſcharging an old one; nor indeed contains any thing new as to things, or the order of them." *Marckii, Chriſtian Theologi Medulla.*

"The Anabaptiſts," ſays another ſyſtematic writer, "think that the Old Teſtament is now abrogated; becauſe we are ſaid to be not under the law, but under grace; confounding the law with the Old Teſtament. The Socinians are of the ſame opinion, becauſe they maintain, that the religion of the Old Teſtament is eſſentially different from the religion of the New; in regard, that under the Old Teſtament, men were ſaved by the obſervation of the law, while we are ſaved by the obſervation of the goſpel. They think,

blasphemous opinions, that Christ is not truly and properly God, and that he was no King or Head of the church before his incarnation, but by no means with the opposite truths.

Human compositions being introduced into the public psalmody of the church, on this principle, that men may improve upon what God hath appointed in his word, by adapting it better to the present state of the visible church, or by rendering it more conducive to devotion; a door will be thereby opened, for the admission of organs, images, holy days, set forms of prayer, surplices, crossing, or any thing that suits the depraved taste of the multitude.

This,

think, therefore, that the reading of the Old Testament is now not necessary, or at least less useful. On the contrary, the Reformed maintain, that even under the New Testament dispensation, the divine authority of both Testaments is the same; and therefore, that the Old Testament is as necessary and useful to be read as the New. Our reasons are, 1. That the books of the Old Testament are of divine inspiration as well as the New, 2 Tim. iii. 16. 2 Pet. i. 20, 21.; and therefore of infallible truth and authority. 2. That the Old Testament was given to the church for a rule of faith and manners as well as the New, Psal. cxlvii. 19, 20. Rom. iii. 2. ix. 4. 3. That we do not read of its abrogation in the New Testament. 4. That, on the contrary, it is confirmed by the command of Christ, John v. 39. Matth. v. 17, 18.; by his practice, Luke xxiv. 29.; by his referring to it, Luke xvi. 29; by the use he continually made of it in refuting his adversaries, Matth. iv. 7. xix. 13. xii. 3, 4. xxii. 29, 43; which was also the practice of the apostles; of Peter, Acts iii. 20.; of Paul, Acts xviii. 28, &c. 5. That the whole doctrine of the New Testament is contained in the Old. Paul declares, Acts xxvi. 22. that he said no other things than what were contained in the Old Testament: So much is this the case, that the Bereans examined the doctrines of the New Testament by the Old, Acts xvii 11. To Jesus, indeed, all the prophets are said to bear testimony, Acts x. 40. Luke xxiv. 27. 6. That some articles of our faith are delivered more clearly and at greater length in the Old Testament than in the New; as the articles concerning the creation of the world, the fall of man, &c. 7. That the Old Testament is said to be the foundation of faith, and of the christian church, Eph. ii. 20. Acts xxiv. 14. 8. That the usefulness of the Old Testament is great and manifold even under the New." *Mastricht's Practica Theologia*, Libro primo, capite secundo, sect. xxxv.

This, like other schemes of superstition, may be justly expected to attend a great and general prevalence of ignorance and lukewarmness as to the purity of religion. In such a night season, the enemy will, no doubt, be employed in sowing the tares of damnable heresies; and hymns are likely to be a very insinuating and successful mean of conveying them into the minds of the people, lulled asleep by the charms of poetry and music.

It is vain to say, that the power of godliness prevailed in the early ages of the church, even after the introduction of such hymns into their worship; for we may now see, that this was one of the evils that prepared the way for the grand apostacy, and that were instrumental in promoting it.* And since

* The Methodists actually introduce their peculiar doctrines into hymns of their own composition, which they artfully intermix with others that express different doctrines. A few instances may be given. The Arminian doctrine of universal redemption occurs frequently in their hymns:

His soul was once an off'ring made
For ev'ry soul of man.

Page 21. of a pocket hymn book, prefaced by Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury.

What shall I do to make it known,
What thou for all mankind hast done! Page 126.

Lovers of pleasure more than God,
For you he suffer'd pain:
Swearers, for you he spilt his blood,
And shall he bleed in vain?

A pastoral Hymn at the beginning.

The doctrine of perfection in this life is a favourite theme:

Let me in thy Spirit live:
Live, till all thy life I know,
Perfect through my Lord below. Page 43.

Let me now in thee,
A new spotless creature:
Perfect, when I walk before thee,
Soon or late, then translate
To the realms of glory. Page 50.

Let me thy witness live,
When sin is all destroy'd. Page 87.

I view

ſince the reformation attained by the proteſtant churches, the admiſſion of this and other corruptions into the worſhip of God, will be far more inexcuſable than it was before the riſe of antichriſt. It ſeems that the guilt and danger of corrupting the ordinances of Chriſt by a mixture of human devices, will increaſe as the time of his ſecond coming draws near. Hence he preſſes us to a ſtedfaſt adherence to our holy profeſſion, from the conſideration of the ſuddenneſs of his coming; *Behold, I come quickly; hold faſt that which thou haſt.*

The THIRD PROPOSITION.

That, in the ſolemn praiſes of the church, the outward part ought to be conducted with decency and ſimplicity, in ſubſervience to the ſpiritual part, which is chiefly to be regarded.

THE decency in the manner of ſinging, which ought to be ſtudied by worſhipping families and congregations, is ſuch a harmony of voices, as may fitly repreſent an agreement of minds in believing what is ſung, and in the exerciſe of ſuitable affections.

The proper means of exciting gracious affections, are not the charms of muſic, but the precious truths of God, as conveyed to us in his own word. It is true, muſic ſerves to excite natural affections; but it is deluſive to ſuppoſe that it will, *in like manner*, excite thoſe that are ſupernatural and heavenly; for ſuch affections have another ſpring; they proceed from faith apprehending ſpiritual things, and particularly Jeſus Chriſt, as ſet forth in the word. It is *in believing*,

I view the Lamb in his own light
Whom angels dimly ſee.

As if they excelled the angels!

Another doctrine taught in their hymns, is the liableneſs of true believers to fall away from grace totally and finally:

I rode on the ſky
Freely juſtified I.
Ah, where am I now?
When was it, or how,
That I fell from my heav'n of grace? Page 203.

ing, not in the hearing of musical sounds, that the *God of hope fills us with joy and peace.* Hence nothing can be a mean of exciting gracious affections, which is not a mean of enlightening our understandings in the true knowledge of Christ, and of leading us to the exercise of faith in him. Little of the art of music is necessary in religious worship: A few tunes, that are chiefly recommended by their gravity and simplicity, may serve to represent the hearty agreement of gospel worshippers; and to prevent the discomposure and inattention to the matter sung, which is apt to be occasioned by a rude confusion of voices. Those who expect greater advantages from the use of music, as an art, in religious worship, will either find themselves miserably disappointed, or what is infinitely worse, they will take up with some carnal reveries or enthusiastic delusions instead of the exercise of saving grace and spiritual affections. Besides, in that case, they are commonly fond of complicated airs, in which the art is most displayed; but which, in religious worship, manifestly tends to cause that distraction of mind, which a more simple melody would be a proper mean of preventing. The truth is, men are greatly deluded, when they place religion in any particular mode of singing; as when it is reckoned, that God is better served by singing according to what are called *the parts*, or by singing *alternately*, than by a more plain and artless manner of singing; because it never can be shewn, that God has required such particular modes of singing in his worship: And therefore, those who insist upon them, as rendering our worship more acceptable to him, cannot be acquitted of superstition.*

Upon

* The scope of this paragraph is expressed in the following sentences of Dr. Owen: "The Papists will, with much earnestness, "many evidences of devotion, and sometimes with difficulty and "danger, repair to their solemn worship; and yet when they are "present, understand not one word, whereby their minds might "be excited unto the real actings of faith, love and delight in "God. Only order, ceremony, music and other incentives of "carnal affections, make great impressions on them. Affections "spiritually renewed, are not concerned in these things. Yea, "if those in whom they are, should be engaged in the use of them, "they would find them means of diverting their mind from their "proper work of divine worship, rather than an advantage there-"in.

Upon these principles, our British ancestors, (denominated Puritans, or Presbyterians) who, being valiant for the truth upon the earth, did and suffered so much to hand down to us the ordinances of Christ in their purity, condemned the following particulars in the singing of the church of England, particularly in their cathedrals:

First. With respect to organs, and other musical instruments, they looked upon the use of them in New Testament worship as quite unwarrantable. It is true, that God was worshipped with instrumental music under the Old Testament dispensation. But this use of it, after the time of David, appears to have been confined to the temple, which was the great theatre of ceremonial worship. This restriction intimated that it belonged to the system of ceremonial rites, which was to be abrogated at the coming of Christ.*

Secondly. Another thing condemned by our ancestors in the worship of the church of England, particularly in their cathedrals, was, that the singing of the divine praises in these churches was restricted to so many persons appointed to that business; others hardly ever joined in the exercise, as not being required by the rules of their cathedral worship. It is represented in scripture as the common duty of church-members,

"in. Real order in the worship of God, that order which is an "effect of divine wisdom, is suited and useful unto spiritual af-"fections. *Beholding your order*, Col. ii. 5. Every thing of God's "appointment is helpful and delightful to them. Affections that "are spiritually renewed, move not, act not, but as faith dis-"covers their object, and directs them unto it." *Treatise of Spiritual-mindedness*, page 303, 316, Glasgow edition.

* *Ecclesia non canit instrumentis inanimatis sed cantu simplici, cujus utilitas magna:* that is, "The church does not sing with in-"animate instruments, but simply with the voice; which is an "exercise of great utility." *Justinus Martyr in libro Quæstionum et Responsionum.* Justin Martyr, to whom this book is ascribed, lived in the second century. It is generally allowed, that organs were not introduced into the worship of the christian church before the seventh century. "The church," says Thomas Aquinas, who lived in the thirteenth century, "does not employ musical "instruments, such as harps and psalteries, in the divine praises, "lest she should seem to Judaize." "Musical instruments," says Calvin, "are no more fit to be used in the worship of the christian "church, than incense, lamps, and other shadows of the law of "Moses."

members, to ſing praiſes to God, and to ſpeak to themſelves in pſalms, hymns, and ſpiritual ſongs. With reſpect to the Pſalmiſtee or ſingers mentioned in eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, they were never heard of in the chriſtian church before the fourth century. From the apoſtolic age till then, ſinging was a part of public worſhip, in which the whole body of the church uſed to join together.*

Thirdly. There were ſome things in the vocal muſic of the eſtabliſhed church of England, as it was performed in her cathedrals, which our pious anceſtors conſidered as inconſiſtent with the ſimplicity of New Teſtament worſhip: Such as, the carrying on of different parts of muſic together, by ſo many ſinging one part, and ſo many another;† and alternate or reſponſive ſinging.‡ Perſons would hardly be fond of ſuch modes of ſinging, if they were exerciſed like Bernard, who, in his meditations, challenges himſelf after public worſhip, for having had more delight in the modulation of the voice, than real compunction of heart; or, like Auguſtin, who ſays in his Confeſſions, "When I find I am "more moved with the muſic than with the matter ſung, I "confeſs that I ſin moſt grievouſly." The truth is, in theſe artificial modes of ſinging, ſo many are the diviſions, repetions, and pauſes; ſuch attention is given to the different parts;

* Primum, quod in cantu damnamus, eſt reſtrictio iſtius miniſterii ad certam claſſem, clericorum, nempe, aliorumque pſaltarum ſelectorum. *Altare Damaſcenum*, cap. viii.

† Secundum eſt cantus ſymphoniacus in eccleſiis cathedralibus. Cantus eccleſiæ primitivæ non erat varius et diſſonus ex quartuor vocum ſymphonia et concurſu, ſed ſimplex. Deinde invectus eſt a Gregorio Quinto, circa annum Domini 735, is cantus qui muſicalis dicitur, ubi ſunt cantores et pueri ſymphoniaci, qui certe mera eſt corruptila cantus eccleſiaſtici, et qui nihil habit pietatis, ſed totus ad aurium delectationem comparatus. *Ibid.*

‡ Tertium quod damnamus, eſt cantus alternatus. Theodoritus de Flaviano et Diodoro ſic refert: Hi primi, in duas partes diviſis cœtibus pſalmos accinentium, inſtituerunt alternis Davidicum melodiam decantare; quod Antiochiæ fieri cœptum pervagatum uſquequaque eſt. Theodoritum ſequuntur Sigebertus, Pamelius et alii complures. Quiſquio eſt auctor, ipſum inſtitutum non eſt laudabile; quia non intelligitur plerunque materia. *Ibid.*

parts; such, in short, is the whole ordering of the manner, as if the matter sung were to be very little regarded; and as if the great design was, to exhibit the musical abilities of one part of the congregation, as an entertainment to the other part of it. That strangers may be hereby allured to attend on the ordinances of religion, is a stale apology, which has been used in defence of other popish corruptions. Mr. Pope compares those who regard nothing in what they read but the style, to such as go to church,

Not for the doctrine, but the music there.

It is not to be ordinarily expected, that people of this class will give attention to any thing except what was their principal object. But it is a pity, that, in order to gratify them by lengthening out the singing, that which is the great end of ordinances, the edification of church members, in knowledge and faith, should be hindered.*

Fourthly. The Puritans, or Presbyterians, also complained, that in the cathedrals of the church of England, certain passages in prose were sung, which were neither psalms nor hymns; such as the creed, part of the eleventh chapter of the Gospel of John, &c. The Non-conformists, of whom we now speak, insisted, that the church of England, like the other Reformed churches, should use a verse translation of the psalms; in singing which, a few plain tunes would be all the music necessary for public worship.†

Fifthly. They also testified against the singing of human compositions in public worship. They complained, that in many of the churches of England, the hymn, entitled, *Te Deum*, was oftener sung than any of the inspired songs.‡

Such

* Hoc quoque damnamus, quod tempus hoc exercitio teritur, aliisque decerpitur magis necessaris et nobilioribus. Nobilior modus est provocandi homines ad devotionem per doctrinam et prædicationem, quam per cantum, ait doctor scholasticus. *Ibid.*

† Quintum quod damnamus, est quod canunt non canenda, ut symbolum, &c. *Ibid.* In quibusdam eorum officiis canunt psalmos soluta oratione secundum morem Romanensium. *Ibid.* cap. x.

‡ Hymnos breviarii Romani non retinent, non autem quia non extant in sacra scriptura. Nam canticum, *Te Deum laudamus*, quod non habetur inter cantica, scripturæ, retinent; et quidem ampliori

Such was the teſtimony of our faithful anceſtors againſt the corruptions of the ordinance of ſinging, which had obtained in the church eſtabliſhed by law in England; a teſtimony which they held at the hazard of all that was dear to them in the world. And it behoves us to conſider, that they bound themſelves, and us, their poſterity, by ſolemn oath and covenant, to hold faſt every part of ſcriptural reformation which they had attained.*

HAVING

ampliori dignantur prærogatica, quam pſalmos aut alia cantica. Hoc habent commune cum aliis ſcripturæ ſacræ partibus pſalmi et cantica, quod lectioni, meditationi, enarrationi, ſeu interpretationi inſerviunt: hoc ſingulare quod canenda. *Ibid*, cap. x.

* That we may be under an additional obligation to endeavour to procure the purity of God's ordinances, by an oath or covenant entered into for that purpoſe, is the doctrine of the Weſtminſter Confeſſion concerning vows, chap. xxii. ſect. 6. Where a vow is declared to be "that whereby we more ſtrictly bind ourſelves to neceſſary duties, ſo far and ſo long as they ſafely conduce hereunto." Thus, as Mr. Durham obſerves on the third commandment, "though our engagement to moral duties cannot make the obligation of God's command greater, yet we thereby join our approbation, and conſent to that whereby, as by a poſitive, ſuperadded voluntary conſent, we bind ourſelves: So that in ſome reſpect we have two bonds, the law and our oath, for one. The latter makes the former have a deeper impreſſion upon us." But ſome ſay, what have we in this land to do with the covenant-engagements that were entered into in Britain? We anſwer, by obſerving, that theſe American churches, which conſiſt either wholly or chiefly of perſons, who themſelves or their forefathers have been members of the Britiſh churches, after theſe churches had entered into the ſolemn covenant-engagements in queſtion, cannot be free from the obligation of them: For, with reſpect to contracts or engagements of a public nature, ſuch as theſe undoubtedly were, (the matter of them alſo being no other than moral duty) if the majority of any church be confeſſedly under the obligation of them, that church itſelf cannot, conſiſtently with the common law of human ſociety, be denied to be under the ſame obligation; for if this be denied, it muſt be for one or other of the following reaſons: Either, 1ſt, Becauſe it was unlawful to enter into theſe engagements at all: or, 2dly, Becauſe they were binding upon that generation only that entered into them, and not upon poſterity: or, 3dly, Becauſe, tho' the preſent generation in Britain and Ireland be under the obligation of them, yet ſuch of them are freed

from

HAVING thus endeavoured to point out some corruptions or abuses in the external part of this exercise, a few things may now be added with respect to the internal and spiritual part of it. While we have the Lord's song in our mouths, we are to make melody to him with our hearts.

In the first place, the spiritual knowledge of what we sing is necessary in this part of divine worship. It is written in the 47th psalm, *Sing ye praises with understanding.* We are chargeable with attempting to mock the Most High God, if we be careless about having a right understanding of his words, which are in our mouths.

The same means should be observed for the understanding of the psalms, which are used for the understanding of other parts of scripture; such as, a careful attention to the signification of the words of the Holy Spirit, to the scope and connection of the passage, and to the analogy of faith; humble

from it as are settled in America: or, 4thly, Because, though it be allowed that the ministry and majority of any church are under the obligation of these engagements, yet the church itself is free from it. But all these reasons are unscriptural and absurd. The first is contrary to the doctrine of the above-mentioned chapter of our Confession, founded on the precepts, promises and examples of God's word, with respect to vowing and swearing to the Lord our God; see Psal. lxxvi. 11. Isai. xix. 18, 21. Ezra. x. Nehem. x. The second is contrary to the common sense of mankind: For when, in any other case, was it ever doubted, that a society, having entered into an oath, (the matter of which is moral duty, and having a manifest respect to posterity) continues, while it is the same society, under the obligation of that oath? It was, by no means, a peculiarity of the people of Israel, but what arises from the common nature of human society, that the covenant which they entered into at Sinai, is all along under the Old Testament represented as obligatory on them. The absurdity of the 3d reason must strike every one who reflects, that the great God, the party sworn to in these engagements, and also the duty (to which they bind us) of holding fast whatever scriptural reformation has been attained, are the same in every part of the world. As to the 4th, it is contrary to the common order of human society, that the majority of the members of a particular church should be under a solemn covenant-engagement to public reformation, and yet the church itself not under it. Thus a professing people, in the circumstance now specified, cannot deny the obligation that they are under from these solemn covenant-engagements, without great absurdity and treachery towards God.

humble and earneſt prayer; without neglecting the help which we may receive from the communication of others, by writing or by word of mouth. Perſons ought to bring their bibles to the place of worſhip, that, when a paſſage is pointed out to be ſung, they may immediately turn to it, and carefully obſerve the words, and the connexion in which they ſtand.*

In the next place, the exerciſe of faith is indiſpenſibly neceſſary in the exerciſe of ſinging the pſalms. For they are full of the language of an appropriating faith. *I will love thee, O Lord, my ſtrength; the Lord is my rock and my fortreſs, and my deliverer, my God, my ſtrength, in whom I will truſt, my buckler, and the horn of my ſalvation, my high tower. In God is my ſalvation and my glory. The rock of my ſtrength, my refuge is in God.* We cannot ſing ſuch paſſages aright, without ſeeking to obtain like precious faith. When we ſing in ſolemn worſhip, it is neceſſary that we regard the words we ſing, as the words of God; as words given by divine inſpiration; as words which God himſelf puts in our mouths for our uſe; and on the truth of which we are to reſt with full confidence for eternity. It is only as applied by faith, that what we ſing becomes profitable to us for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, or conſolation. In a word, there are no genuine or acceptable praiſes of God on earth, but ſuch as are found in the mouth of faith.

Further,

* This cuſtom, which has long prevailed among Preſbyterians, and which ſome now ſeem diſpoſed to lay aſide, ought undoubtedly to be encouraged: 1. It is often proper for the hearer to read the paſſage of the pſalm, propoſed to be ſung, in the proſe tranſlation. 2. In that ſort of diſcourſe, which is commonly called a Lecture, it is proper for the hearer to keep his eye on the verſes, while the miniſter reads them, and points out the deſign and connexion of them. 3. It is often uſeful for hearers to mark in their bibles ſome of the texts quoted in the ſermon. 4. People in the country, generally living at a conſiderable diſtance from the place of public worſhip, ſhould have their bibles to make uſe of in the intervals of worſhip. They ſhould then be reviewing the paſſages of ſcripture which have been diſcourſed on, and praying for the Lord's bleſſing on what they have heard, or if they converſe with one another, the bible ſhould furniſh the ſubjects of their converſation.

Further, it is neceſſary to exerciſe gracious affections in our ſolemn praiſes; ſuch as an holy awe and reverence of God, joined with ſuperlative love to him, in ſinging of his glorious and amiable excellencies, as they are manifeſted in Chriſt to his church; an utter abhorrence of ſin, and godly ſorrow for it, in ſinging of the guilt and pollution of it; gratitude and holy joy, in ſinging of ſalvation through a Redeemer; fear and trembling, in ſinging of the judgments which he executes upon the ungodly. Here it is ſtill to be remembered, that thoſe ſpiritual affections cannot otherwiſe be begun, continued or increaſed, than by that faith which apprehends him who alone is worthy to be praiſed, in his own word.

Finally, we are by no means to ground our expectation of profit to our ſouls in this part of ſolemn worſhip, upon any natural connexion that may appear to be between the muſic and the emotions or paſſions of our minds: Becauſe the connexion between any outward exerciſe, and the good of our ſouls, is purely ſupernatural; depending upon the appointment and bleſſing of Chriſt, and the working of his Spirit. *The Spirit*, ſaith he, *is that which quickeneth; the fleſh profiteth nothing. The words which I ſpeak unto you, they are ſpirit, and they are life.*

APPENDIX.

N°. I.

Of the HISTORY *of* PSALMODY.

THE following obſervations are offered, for the removal of ſome prejudices with reſpect to the hiſtory of pſalmody.

I. Though it could be ſhewn, that the ſinging of human compoſitions in the ordinary public worſhip of the church, obtained as early as the firſt part of the ſecond century, yet this

this would not be ſufficient to juſtify the practice from the charge of ſuperſtition. Because (as hath been ſhewn abundantly by our writers in the Popiſh and Epiſcopal controverſies) there were various manifeſt corruptions in doctrine and worſhip, which, even in that early period, began to prevail in the chriſtian church. Thus, according to Juſtin Martyr, they mixed the ſacramental wine with water; a practice which had nothing in ſcripture to countenance it. It was then a principal ſubject of controverſy, on what day Eaſter ought to be celebrated; though there is no divine warrant for the obſervation of it at all. Papias, biſhop of Hierapolis, ſuppoſed to have been a diſciple of John the apoſtle, and of great authority among the primitive chriſtians, taught, that after the reſurrection, there ſhall be a thouſand years wherein Chriſt is to be corporally preſent, and reign on earth. Thus, the churches in the ſecond century were not free from error and ſuperſtition.

II. Several arguments which have been uſed in ſupport of the opinion, that hymns of human compoſure were ſung in the early ages of chriſtianity, by worſhipping aſſemblies, as we now ſing the pſalms, are manifeſtly defective. This is the caſe with a paſſage of Tertullian, quoted by Grotius on Matthew xxvi. 30. which informs us, that it was the cuſtom in ſome chriſtian aſſemblies, for church members to be called forth, in order to their ſinging, every one what occurred to him, either from the ſcriptures or from his own gift: *Ut quiſque de ſcripturis, vel de proprio ingenio poteſt, provocatur in medium Deo canere:* For what theſe words deſcribe is the ſinging of individuals; *ut quiſque provocatur in medium;* not the joint ſinging of the whole aſſembly. What is referred to in this and ſimiliar paſſages, which we meet with in the writers of the ſecond and third centuries, appears to have been either irregular and blameable, or the exerciſe of an extraordinary gift; in either of which caſes, it muſt be allowed to be improper for our imitation. We know of no hymns dictated in this manner, which ever came into uſe in the ordinary public worſhip of the church. If there had been any ſuch, one ſhould think, there would have been ſome collection either extant, or, at leaſt, mentioned by Juſtin Martyr, Cyprian, or ſome other eminent writer of the firſt three centuries.

ries. But among them there appears to be a deep silence on this head.

Some allege, that the singing of human compositures is referred to in an expression that is used in an epistle of the younger Pliny to Trajan, concerning the case of those christians whom he had examined. The passage is to this purpose: "An anonymous libel was presented to me, containing the names of many. As to those who denied that "ever they had been christians, as soon as they had, after "my example, invoked the gods, offered wine and incense "to your statue, and blasphemed Christ, (a thing which, it "is said, no true christian can be brought to do) I dismissed "them. Others, also mentioned in the libel, confessed "that they had formerly been christians, but that they had "renounced that religion; some of them lately, and some "of them many years ago. All these paid the reverence "that was required to your statue, and to the images of the "the gods, and blasphemed Christ. They affirmed, that "the whole fault or error of the christians, consisted in their "practice of meeting together on a stated day, before sun-"rising; of singing a hymn to Christ, as to God; and of "obliging themselves by a solemn oath to abstain from all "manner of wickedness."

It deserves notice, that the practice here described, is not what "Pliny himself, or any other spies that might creep in-"to christian assemblies," had been witnesses of, but what some persons who had formerly been christians, declared upon their examination before Pliny. It is evident, that the worship of Christ was the cause of the persecution at this time. And therefore, though these apostates found themselves obliged to acknowledge the innocence of their former associates in all other respects, they would not fail to represent what rendered them at that time obnoxious to the reigning powers. This was not, in itself, a misrepresentation; yet it can hardly be deemed sufficient to prove that any other than the scripture-songs were then sung in the solemn worship of christians; because while the singing of the psalms was indeed the worship of the only true God, these apostates knew, that it was at the same time considered by christians, as the worship of Christ; and they might mention this particular of their worship, as being that which rendered

rendered them odious to their heathen judges. It may alſo be inquired, whether the exactneſs of Pliny's account in this particular is to be relied on, ſince it was all one, as to the ground upon which the chriſtians were condemned, whether it was in hymns or prayers that Chriſt was worſhipped; and ſince it is well known, that the heathen writers betray great ignorance and careleſſneſs in their accounts of ſuch matters.

To prove that hymns of human compoſure were uſed in the ordinary ſolemn worſhip of the ancient church, the author of a Diſcourſe on Pſalmody ſhews, that Nepos, Clemens Alexandrinus, Gregory Nazianzen and others, wrote hymns for the edification of their brethren. But while it is not ſhewed, that theſe hymns were actually uſed in the ordinary ſolemn worſhip of the church, his adducing them is nothing to his purpoſe: They are no more inſtances of what he pleads for, than the poems in Mr. Flavel's Huſbandry and Navigation ſpiritualized, or Mr. Erſkine's Goſpel Sonnets, which were never intended for the uſe of the church as forms of pſalmody in her ſolemn worſhip.

When the ſame author tells us, that Paulus of Samoſata, was condemned by an eccleſiaſtical council for ſetting aſide the pſalms that had formerly been ſung *in gloriam Chriſti*, to the glory of Chriſt, he ſhould have added, what was ſo peculiarly horrible in this caſe,—Paulus' ſubſtituting in the ſtead of thoſe pſalms, hymns in his own praiſe.* What induced that author to omit this part of the fact is beſt known to himſelf: But every reader muſt feel the difference between this repreſentation of it and his. Something more than bare aſſertion is neceſſary to ſatisfy us, that the ſcripture-pſalms cannot properly be ſaid to be pſalms in honour of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. And every one muſt allow that if Paulus attempted to ſubſtitute ſongs in his own praiſe, inſtead of the ſcripture-ſongs, in the ſolemn worſhip of the church, he was a proper object, on that account, of the higheſt eccleſiaſtical cenſure.

It

* Pſalmi in gloriam Chriſti ante cantati ſublatis, et cantilenæ in honorem ejus introductæ non ſine horrore audientium. *Lætus's Compend. Hiſt. Univ.* page 85.

It may be allowed, that in the fourth century, or even sooner, some human compositures appear to have been sung in the public worship of the church. Thus we read of songs used in the church of Antioch, about the middle of the fourth century, agreeably to the Nicene Creed, which, it is said, Leontius, a crafty Arian bishop, bore with. But the singing of these hymns may justly be ranked among those unwarrantable innovations in the worship of God, which, upon one pretence or another, began in that period to be multiplied. But that, even then, the singing of human compositures was of no good name in the church of God, is highly probable from the following passage in the decree of the council of Laodicea, held about the year 364. In canon 59th, it is decreed, that no ἰδιωτικας ψαλμους, no psalms that are the compositures of private persons should be sung in churches, nor any books read which are not canonical. The author of the Discourse on Psalmody has given us a criticism on ἰδιωτικας, as here used. He represents the venerable council, as gravely determining that no psalms composed by unlearned and ignorant persons should be sung in the churches. Hardly any reader can be at a loss about the acceptation of the word here, when he observes, that it stands opposed to κανονικας, for hence it is plain, that the songs here prohibited are songs not canonical, or not contained in the sacred scriptures.*

Some insist, that we should sing such doxologies as were used in the fourth century, and continue to be used in some churches to this day, This, they say, is a proper testimony against the Arian heresy. We answer, that our confession of faith, our sermons and prayers, sufficiently declare, that, in singing the psalms, we take their true sense to be quite contrary to Arianism, and that we consider them as expressing the personality, necessary existence and supreme Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. We say doxologies, as a judicious divine observes; that is, we give and ascribe glory and praise to the blessed Trinity in several expressions in our prayers, and particularly in the conclusion of them. And we sing doxologies to the blessed Trinity, when we sing psalms to the

* The council in the same canon gives a list of the canonical books.

the praiſe and glory of God. And, though ſometimes only one perſon is named, yet the other perſons are alſo underſtood. It is indeed neceſſary to give glory and praiſe to the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt; but the finging in ſolemn worſhip of a particular form of words, not to be found in the ſcripture, is not neceſſary either by ſcripture precept or example. Beſides, the doxology hath been, and is uſed in a ſuperſtitious manner. Who can account for their practice, who, after the finging of a ſcripture-pſalm, riſe up and ſtand at the finging of the doxology; as if greater reverence were due to a hymn of human compoſure, than to pſalms and hymns indited by the Spirit of God.*

III. We have ſuch hiſtorical evidence as may ſatisfy us, that the ſcripture-pſalms were ſung in the chriſtian church before the fourth century. Tertullian, a writer of the third century, enumerating the public exerciſes then in uſe, mentions the finging of pſalms, as well as the reading of the ſcriptures and the delivery of ſermons.† In another place, he ſpeaks of it as a well known fact, that the 133d pſalm was ſtatedly ſung at the adminiſtration of the ſacrament of the ſupper, blames the Catholics (he being then a Montaniſt) for not finging it except at that time, and repreſents the ſchemes of the Montaniſts as agreeable to the profeſſion of brotherly love and ſympathy, which was made in the finging that pſalm at the celebration of the ſacrament.‡

We cannot think, that the writers of the fourth and fifth centuries, would have repreſented, as they do, the finging of the pſalms as the common and ancient practice of the church, if it had not been in uſe before the fourth century. Cyril of

* Wiſheart's Theologia. † De Anima, cap. 9.

‡ See his treatiſe de Jejuniis, cap. 13. where we have the following words: Vide quam bonum et quam jucundum, habitare fratres in unum! Hoc tu pſallere non facile noſti; niſi quo tempore cum compluribus cœnas. Conventus autem illi, ſtationibus prius et jejunationibus operati; dolere cum dolentibus; et ita demum congaudere gaudentibus nôrunt. Si et iſta ſolennia, quibus tunc præſens pretrocinatus eſt ſermo, nos quoque in diverſis provinciis fungimur, in ſpiritu repræſentati, lex eſt ſacramenti.

of Jeruſalem,* and Jerome, both writers of the fourth century, tell us, that the 31ſt and the 45th pſalms were ſung at the euchariſt. Auguſtine plainly intimates, that this was the practice of his own church: For, in one of his homilies,† he takes notice of the epiſtle, and then of ſinging the 65th pſalm. The following paſſage from Caſſian, a writer of the 5th century, in vindication of the Egyptian monks, is remarkable. "Our elders," ſays he, ſpeaking as a member of their ſociety, "have not changed the ancient cuſtom "of ſinging pſalms, but the devotions are performed in the "ſame order as formerly, in the meetings by night: The "hymns which it had been the cuſtom in this country to "ſing at the end of the night vigils, were the ſame hymns "which they ſing at this day, namely, the 50th, the 62d, "the 89th, the 148th and following pſalms."‡

From this paſſage it is evident, 1ſt, That the pſalms of David were called hymns; and therefore when we read in the ancient writers of ſinging an hymn, without any farther explication, it may be underſtood of a ſcripture-ſong. 2dly, That, in Caſſian's time, the ſinging of David's pſalms was an ancient practice, *antiqua conſuetudo pſalmorum*; which it could not then be called with any propriety, if it had not been in uſe before the fourth century. Hence, in order to vindicate the Egyptian monks from the charge of novelry, he tells us, that they ſung the pſalms of David, and not hymns of human compoſure.

From an expreſſion which occurs in ſome writers of the fourth century, namely, that the pſalms of David began to be ſung at ſuch a particular time and place, it has been concluded, that, before that time, ſome other ſongs or human compoſures were ſung in public worſhip. But ſuch an expreſſion may be underſtood, not of the pſalms of David coming in the place of human compoſures formerly uſed; but of the exerciſe of ſinging being then introduced or reſtored in a particular church.

"It appears," ſays Calvin, "that the cuſtom of ſinging "in churches is not only very ancient, but apoſtolical; as we "may

* Catech. Myſt. 5. n. 17. † Serm. 10. De verbis Apoſtoli.

‡ Caſſian. Lib. 3. cap. 6.

" may gather from the words of Paul, *I will ſing with the* " *ſpirit, and I will ſing with the underſtanding alſo;* and from " the epiſtle to the Coloſſians, iii. 16. Auguſtine however " ſhews, that that cuſtom was not univerſal. He tells us, that " they began to ſing in the church of Milan, under the " miniſtry of Ambroſe, when Juſtina, the mother of Va- " lentinian, raging againſt the orthodox faith, a particular " fervour and aſſiduity in religious exerciſes was excited a- " mong the people. In this cuſtom, they were followed by " the reſt of the weſtern churches. Singing had all along " been uſed in the eaſt. In the 2d book of Auguſtine's Re- " tractions, he intimates, that, in his time, the African church " uſed ſinging. One Hilary, ſays he, reproached the cuſtom " which then obtained at Carthage, of ſinging hymns out of " the book of pſalms, either before the offering for the be- " nefit of the poor, or while diſtribution was made of what " had been offered. I anſwered that reviler, at the deſire of " the brethren."* " The Donatiſts," ſays Auguſtine in ano- ther place, " reproach us, becauſe we ſing with ſobriety " the divine ſongs of the prophets; while they inflame their " minds with the poetical compoſitions of human genius."†

Our opponents appear to lay much ſtreſs upon the aſſertion of Moſheim, that, in the fourth century, the pſalms of David were introduced into the chriſtian church. We are far from diſputing the general character of Moſheim as a learned and induſtrious hiſtorian: Yet it is neceſſary to obſerve, for the ſake of the unlearned reader, that the aſſer- tions of a modern writer, like Moſheim, who lived in the preſent century, with reſpect to ancient facts, are to be no otherwiſe eſteemed, than according as they are ſupported by the authority of ancient hiſtorians.

The aſſertions of hiſtorical writers are often not authentic facts, but inferences drawn from ſuch facts. A modern hiſtorian, like Moſheim, may be very valuable, though ſome of his inferences be inaccurate. Two things may have given occaſion to the aſſertion now mentioned. One is, that, in the latter part of the fourth century pope Damaſus is ſaid to have

* Calvin Inſtitut. Lib. iii. cap. 20. § 32.

† Epiſt. 119. c. 18. tom. 2.

have introduced the singing of the psalms into the western church, and appointed the Hallelujah to be sung at other times as well as at Easter. But all that can be justly inferred from this is, that the exercise of singing had before been much neglected in that part of the church, and that Damasus attempted to render it general; for, as Mr. Calvin observes, it was not so in the beginning of that century. The other thing is, that about the same time Flavian and Dioscorus introduced into the church of Antioch an alternate singing of the psalms of David, by two bands of singers. But why may it not be allowed, that what they introduced was the alternate manner of singing, and the two bands of singers. It is an undoubted historical fact, that the Cantores, or singers, were unknown in the church before the fourth century. Besides, supposing (but not granting) that the church of Antioch had not been for some time before, in the practice of singing the psalms of David, it will not follow, that these psalms had never before been sung by that church; and far less will it follow, that they had not been sung by any other part of the catholic church: We have produced an instance of their being sung in public worship in the third century, from Tertullian, and have shewn by quotations from Cyril of Jerusalem, Jerome, Augustine and Cassian, that, in the fourth and fifth centuries, the singing of them not only obtained, but was then considered as an ancient custom. We may here add the testimony of Chrysostom, who allows the psalms of David the first, the middle, and the last place in the public praises of the church.*

The author of a Discourse on Psalmody says, the practice of singing David's psalms in public worship, "decided clearly in favour of that tenet of Arianism, that divine worship was to be paid only to the Father."† We leave the reader to consider how great a reproach this assertion casts upon the character of those eminent lights of the ancient church; whose writings testify that they sung David's psalms. Can we suppose, that they who contended so earnestly

* Primus et medius et novissimus est David. Chrysostom. Hom. 6. de pœnitentia.

† Discourse on Psalmody, page 103.

earneſtly and ſucceſsfully againſt Arianiſm, would allow themſelves or others in a practice which decided in favour of Arianiſm? And is it not blaſphemy againſt the word of God, to repreſent the uſe of any part of it in his worſhip as deciding in favour of Arianiſm,—as deciding againſt itſelf?

IV. All the Reformed churches uſe the whole book of pſalms in their public praiſes. And the beſt Reformed, in their pureſt times, uſed no other. Though ſome of the Reformed churches retained, among other popiſh corruptions, a few human compoſures in their pſalmody, yet the principle which is now ſo much inſiſted upon, namely, that the pſalms of David are unſuitable to the ſtate and privileges of the New Teſtament church, was unknown among proteſtants in the early days of the reformation. It is perfectly agreeable to the genius of the proteſtant religion, *ut eccleſia*, as Maſtricht ſays, *nulla cantica publice cantanda permittat, niſi quæ proſtant in ſcripturis;* that the church ſhould allow no ſongs to be ſung in her public worſhip, but ſuch as are found in the holy ſcriptures.

N°. II.

Of Dr. Watts' Imitation *of the* Psalms, *as amended by* Mr. Barlow.

THE public has been lately informed, that the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, (now called, The General Aſſembly of the Preſbyterian Church in North America) "appointed a committee to examine the different verſions "of the book of pſalms, to which they could have acceſs, "and from them to ſelect ſuch a collection as they ſhould "judge beſt; and to lay it before the ſynod, at a future "meeting, for their conſideration: That in purſuance of "this appointment, the committee proceeded on the buſi-"neſs; and after a conſiderable time, reported to this pur-"poſe; "That having compared ſuch verſions as they could "obtain, they did not apprehend any ſo well calculated

"for

" for chriſtian worſhip as that of Dr. Watts', as amended " by Mr. Barlow of New England." That the verſion, " thus amended, was then laid before the ſynod for their " conſideration, who, after mature deliberation, gave it " their judicial ſanction; as may be ſeen in a printed ex- " tract from their minutes, bound up with the ſaid verſion."*

This is a matter in which, as it effects the purity of divine worſhip, the whole chriſtian church is deeply concerned. It is indeed our duty to ſubmit to the determination of church courts, concerning articles of faith or the manner of divine worſhip, when they are (what they ought to be) only examples of the due exerciſe of that authority, which Chriſt hath given his miniſters, to act jointly in exhibiting and applying, as particular caſes require, the rule of his word contained in the ſcriptures of the Old and New Teſtament. But it is no leſs our duty to bear teſtimony againſt ſuch of their determinations, as are contrary to his word. Hence it is manifeſt, that chriſtians ought, by no means, to acquieſce in the ſynodical determination now mentioned; till they have ſeriouſly and impartially conſidered, whether the Imitation of the Pſalms of David by Dr. Watts, as corrected by Mr. Barlow, ought to be preferred, as more proper to be ſung in the church than the pſalms themſelves, faithfully tranſlated. As a mean of exciting church members to this inquiry, and of aſſiſting them in it, the following obſervations on that Imitation are humbly offered.

SECT. I. *Of the Title of this Book.*

THIS performance has been called a verſion, or tranſlation. But the compariſon of a ſingle verſe with the original, is ſufficient to convince the reader of the impropriety of calling it ſo. This impropriety is the more manifeſt as Dr. Watts himſelf did not give this work to the public as a tranſlation. In his preface, as well as in the title page, he calls it an *Imitation* of the Pſalms. The difference between a tranſlation and an imitation is commonly underſtood. He is not a tranſlator, who does not ſay the ſame thing in one language

* Mr. Black's Sermon on Pſalmody, page 46.

language which his author says in another. But he may be a very good imitator; he may copy his manner, and yet say very different things. Translation requires diligence and faithfulness. But imitation leaves room for invention. Dr. Samuel Clarke translated Homer's Iliad into Latin. Virgil imitated it in the same language. Thus Phædrus represents himself as an imitator, not a translator of Æsop, when he says of his fables:

Quas Æsopeas, non Æsopi nomino.

Is there not something too assuming in this title? Is not the word of God as well as his works inimitable? *There is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works.*

Sect. II. *A Review of Dr. Watts' Imitation of the First Psalm.*

It will be allowed, that there is not one of the imitations in this book, that comes nearer the form of the original, and that the generality of them are farther from it, than the imitation of the first psalm. Indeed, there are no such Hebrew idioms or allusions to antiquated rites, as could afford the Doctor the least pretence for departing from the style of the original. This is, therefore, fixed on as a proper example; by examining which we may observe, how little of the form of the original is retained in the imitation.

1. BLEST is the man who *shuns the place*,
Where sinners *love to meet*;
Who *fears* to tread their wicked ways,
And *hates* the scoffer's seat.

2. But in the statutes of the Lord
Hath plac'd his chief delight:
By day *he reads or hears* the word,
And meditates by night.

3. [He, like *a plant of generous kind*,
By living waters set,
Safe from the storm of blast and wind,
Enjoys a peaceful state.]

4. Green

4. Green as the leaf, and *ever fair*,
Shall his profeſſion ſhine;
While fruits of holineſs appear
Like cluſters on the vine.

5. Not ſo the impious and unjuſt:
What vain deſigns they form?
Their hopes are blown away like duſt,
Or chaff before the ſtorm.

6. Sinners in judgment ſhall not ſtand,
Among *the ſons of grace;*
When *Chriſt the Judge at his right hand,*
Appoints the ſaints a place.

7. *His eye* beholds the path they tread,
His heart approves it well:
But *crooked ways of ſinners lead*
Down to the gates of hell.

N. B. The words or phraſes printed in Italicks are not in the original.

Not walking in the counſel of the ungodly, means more than *ſhunning the place where ſinners love to meet;* for all the counſel which the ungodly give, or take, ſurely comprehends a great deal more than the Doctor's phraſe. He ſpeaks of the affections of *fearing* and *hating*, where the pſalmiſt's expreſſions plainly denote the habitual practice. The repetition of the negative particle is a beauty which he has not attempted to preſerve in any of his imitations of this pſalm. He ſeems alſo to have overlooked the gradation in the words, *ungodly*, *ſinners*, *ſcorners*; of which many judicious commentators conſider the ſecond as ſetting forth a worſe character than the firſt; and the third, a worſe than the ſecond. Such is the progreſs of that apoſtacy from which *the Lord preſerveth the faithful.*

In the ſecond verſe, the pſalmiſt teacheth us, that it is the diſtinguiſhing character of the godly, that they are endowed with a new principle of delight in the law of the Lord, which diſpoſes them to habitual meditation on it. The *reading* and *hearing* of the word, which the Doctor adds, are aſcribed to unbelievers as well as believers, Math. xxii. 31. James i. 23.; and are not ſo properly joined with habitual meditation on it, as that which diſtinguiſhes the truly godly from

from others, Pſal. cxix. 97. Jerem. xv. 16. Beſides, no good reaſon can be given for the Doctor's diſtinguiſhing the night as the proper ſeaſon of meditation, when the pſalmiſt had repreſented day and night indiſcriminately, as the ſeaſon of it: And in the text juſt now cited, he tells us, it was his exerciſe all the day.

In the third verſe, the pſalmiſt compares the godly man to a *tree* planted by the rivers of water. But the Doctor, attempting to improve upon the pſalmiſt, has ſubſtituted *a plant of generous kind.* He ſeems to have no good reaſon for changing the tree into a plant.* When the Doctor adds, that it is ſafe from the ſtorms and blaſting winds, and enjoying a peaceful ſtate, he wanders not only from the language and ſentiments of the pſalmiſt, but from the ſubject: For what the pſalmiſt is here conſidering is the continued fruitfulneſs of the tree as proceeding from a permanent cauſe. Beſides, the reader, or ſinger, that follows the Doctor will be led into ſuch doubts about the conſiſtency of theſe two lines with many places of ſcripture which tell us, that the godly are toſſed with tempeſts, and engaged in a continual warfare, as muſt greatly divert the mind from the particular point to which we are led by the ſimplicity and preciſion of the words of the pſalmiſt.

The Doctor cannot be excuſed for omitting, in all his three imitations of this pſalm, that emphatical and inſtructive expreſſion, *in his ſeaſon;* ſince there is ſo much of the beauty of a holy practice in giving every duty its own time and place.

The

* "A plant," ſays a very good judge of the Engliſh language, "is any vegetable production ariſing from ſeed, but ſeems confined to ſuch as are not very large. Thus ſaplings are the "largeſt that ſhould be called plants." It has been obſerved, in defence of the imitation, that, in various places of ſcripture, the idea of a plant is annexed to that of a tree. This is not denied. But becauſe one idea is connected with another, we are not therefore to confound them. No ideas are more eaſily diſtinguiſhed than theſe two, the ſtate of a vegetable production when it is come to maturity and bearing fruit, (which is plainly what the pſalmiſt here meant) and the ſtate of it when it was only a plant. The word *tree* indeed may ſometimes denote the kind, as diſtinguiſhed from herbs, as in Gen. i. 29. Levit. xix. 23; but here it denotes not only the kind of the production, but the ſtate of it.

The laſt clauſe of this verſe *(whatever he doth ſhall proſper*, or, as ſome render it, *it ſhall bring to full ripeneſs whatever it beareth,*)* is wholly omitted in the Doctor's firſt and ſecond imitations. In the third, indeed, he gives us two lines in place of it;

> And heaven will ſhine with kindeſt beams
> On every work his hands begin.

On theſe lines two things may be remarked; 1ſt, That the metaphors here introduced by the Doctor, being different from the ſimile of the pſalmiſt, diverts the attention from it. 2dly, That any meaning that can be put upon the expreſſion, *heaven will ſhine with kindeſt beams*, (that is, ſuppoſing it to ſignify the cauſe of proſpering) is fully held forth to us by the pſalmiſt in that part of the ſimile, in which the rivers of waters are repreſented as the cauſe of fruitfulneſs.

In the imitation of the fourth verſe, we have an example of the bad effect of multiplying words unneceſſarily: The perſons here ſpoken of are ſaid to be both impious and unjuſt; as if ſome impious perſons might proſper, provided they were not alſo unjuſt. The ſecond line of this ſtanza is ſuperfluous, the ſenſe of it being ſufficiently expreſſed in the third line. Their hopes, ſays he, are blown away like duſt before the ſtorm. But this is far from the ſignificance of the pſalmiſt's expreſſion, which includes their perſons, profeſſions, and works, as well as their hopes. How flat is the verboſe manner of the Doctor compared with the noble ſimplicity of the original! *The ungodly are not ſo: but are like the chaff, which the wind driveth away.*

In the next verſe, we have two words, *ungodly* and *ſinners*; which, though often uſed as ſynonimous, are of different derivation and import; and they are both uſed here to intimate, that no ſort of tranſgreſſors, not even thoſe who elude the ſevereſt ſcrutiny of men, ſhall eſcape the judgment of God. Again, the pſalmiſt repreſents ſtanding in judgment, and ſtanding in the aſſembly of the righteous, in different members of the verſe, as what are to be conſidered diſtinctly. Theſe diſtinctions the Doctor has not attempted to preſerve in his imitation.

The

* See the preface of Robertſon's Clavis Pentateuchi.

The antitheſis between the eye and the heart is a childiſh conceit. The original pſalm concludes with a conciſe and nervous expreſſion, *The way of the wicked ſhall periſh:* that is, themſelves with their works, projects, and purpoſes, ſhall periſh. The imitator, dropping the figure here uſed, loſes not only the poetry, but alſo much of the ſenſe.

In order to be convinced, that it is not the verſification that occaſions ſuch a departure from the ſtyle and manner of the ſacred original, the reader may compare the imitation of this pſalm with the verſion of it uſed by the church of Scotland.

Sect. III. *Examples of Erroneous Expreſſions in Dr. Watts' Imitation, corrected and enlarged by Mr. Barlow.*

The Doctor ſays, he has tranſlated the ſecond pſalm according to the divine pattern, Acts iv. 24, &c. But he confounds the tranſlation in the 25th and 26th verſes of that paſſage, with the uſe and application of the pſalm in verſes 27 and 28.

The pſalms ought to be read and ſung in an exact and literal tranſlation, like that in ver. 25 and 26, that the church, and particular members of it, may make that improvement of them which their preſent ſituation and circumſtances require, after the example here ſet us by the apoſtles.

> The good and faithful ſoul ſhall find
> A God *as* faithful and *as* kind. Pſal. xviii. 5.

The pſalmiſt indeed ſays, With the merciful thou wilt ſhew thyſelf merciful; but he does not ſay *as* merciful: For though, when the Lord enables his people to gracious exerciſes, there is a ſuitableneſs thereto in their experience of his gracious dealing with them; but not any proportion like that between work and wages.

> Juſtice and truth attend thee ſtill;
> But mercy is thy choice. Pſal. xlv. com. met. ver. 5.

There is nothing in the original that repreſents mercy as more properly the choice of Chriſt than juſtice and truth. In Chriſt mercy and truth meet together, righteouſneſs and peace kiſs each other. The author of the *Night Thoughts* ſpeaks more agreeably to the analogy of faith:

In love immenſe, inviolably juſt,
Thou, rather than thy juſtice ſhould be ſtained,
Didſt ſtain the croſs.

The world admires her heavenly dreſs.
Pſal. xlv. 2d part, long met. ver. 2.

There is no ſuch thing in the original. And ſurely if by dreſs be meant goſpel holineſs, it is rather hated than admired by the world, John xv. 19.

A ſoul oppreſt with ſin's deſert,
My God will ne'er deſpiſe.
Pſa. xli. 2d. part, com. met. ver. 4.

Cain and Judas had nothing of that broken and contrite heart which the pſalmiſt ſays, *God will not deſpiſe*; and yet, it is manifeſt, their ſouls were oppreſſed with ſin's deſert.

'Tis thy own Son, ————
Thy firſt-born Son, adorn'd and bleſt
With power and grace above the reſt. Pſal. lxxx. 11.

Since the imitator gives theſe words as the meaning of pſalm lxxx. 17. where Chriſt is ſpoken of as Mediator, and is called the Son of man, not the Son of God; does it not appear that the imitator meant to foiſt in here his well known tenet, (abundantly confuted by Dr. Gill and others) that Chriſt's being the Son of God, as well as his being the Son of man, ariſes from his Mediatory office?*

With his rich gifts the heavenly *Dove*
Deſcends and fills the place;
While Chriſt reveals his wondrous love,
And ſheds abroad his grace. Pſal. lxxxiv. com. met. ver. 3

Here

* It appears from ſome of the Doctor's works, particularly, that entitled, *Uſeful and important Queſtions concerning Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God*, and from another entitled, *The Glory of Chriſt as God-man diſplayed*, that he taught, that the Sonſhip of Chriſt referred to his human nature, or to his office of Meſſiah; that his human ſoul exiſted with the Father from before the creation of the world; that the man Chriſt became properly God through his union to the Deity itſelf, perſonally conſidered as the Father; that the Holy Spirit is not a perſon really diſtinct from the Father, but the divine power or influence, or God himſelf exerting his influence; that there are no real diſtinct perſons in the Godhead. *See Memoirs of the Lives, Characters and Writings of Dr. Iſaac Watts, and Dr. Philip Doddridge*, printed at Boſton in 1793, pag. 90, 91, 92, 100, 101, 102, 122, 141, 142.

Here distinct offices are assigned to the Son and the Holy Spirit; the latter descending and filling the house, while the former reveals and sheds abroad his grace. This way of distinguishing these two persons of the Godhead has no warrant from this psalm, or any other place of scripture. The Son's revealing his grace and shedding abroad his love, are by the Holy Spirit, John xvi. 14. Rom. v. 5.; and therefore cannot with any propriety be represented as distinguishing him from the Holy Sprit.

> Thou art my chosen King; thy throne
> Shall stand eternal, like my own.
> Psal. lxxxix. first part, ver. 3.

Do not these words imply, that the throne of Christ is not the throne of God, being only like it? This doctrine is contrary to Heb. i. 8. *But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever;* and to Rev. iii. 21. *I overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne.*

> Believe, and take the promis'd rest;
> Obey, and be for ever blest. Psal. xcv. long met. ver. 7.

Here obey and be blest, or, in other words, Do and live, is represented as of the same signification with, Believe and be saved: As if there were no real difference between salvation by works and salvation by grace through faith.

> Mercy and truth on *all* are met. Psal. lxxxv. 2d part, ver. 2.
>
> He comes to make his blessings flow
> *Far as the curse* is found. Psal. xcviii.

These exrpessions are very extravagant, and countenance the blasphemous opinion of universal salvation.

> What wonders hath his wisdom done!
> How mighty is his hand!
> Heaven, earth and sea he fram'd alone:
> How wide is his command! Psal. cxxxvi. com. met. ver. 2.

Is it because the imitator judged the sweet expressions, *His mercy endureth for ever*, unsuitable to the New Testament dispensation, that he hath set it aside here, and put expressions of a different import in its place?

> Thou art my portion when I die,
> Be thou my refuge here.

The psalmist declares that God was his portion in the land of the living; that is, here as well as hereafter; while he lived,

lived, as well as when he died: Carnal men perſuade themſelves that they would have God for their portion when they die; but in the mean time preſer the vanities of the world and the pleaſures of ſin.

> He moved their mighty wheels
> In *unknown ages paſt.*

How can the ages in which the heavenly bodies have been performing their revolutions be ſaid to be unknown, while we know by the word of God that it is not yet 6000 years ſince their creation?

SECT. IV. *Examples of the Strain of Diſcourſe being altered by the Imitator.*

EVERY reader will obſerve, that in the pſalms there are various kinds of diſcourſe, ſuch as, aſſertion, exhortation, prayer, narrative, promiſing, threatening. It cannot be diſputed by any who believe that all ſcripture is given by inſpiration of God, that, whichſoever of theſe kinds of diſcourſe are uſed in any place of ſcripture, it is uſed there for ſome neceſſary and important purpoſe; and that no other would be ſo proper in the ſame place or connexion. He cannot, therefore, be acquitted from the charge of preſumption, who, inſtead of the kind of diſcourſe actually uſed in any place of ſcripture, ſubſtitutes another, ſuppoſing it to be better adapted to the true ſcope and deſign of that place. How far this charge may be brought againſt the imitation of the pſalms by Dr. Watts, the reader may judge from the following inſtances:

The genus dicendi, or mode of ſpeaking, is,

In the Original.	In the Imitation.
Pſal. iv., 5. An exhortation.	A profeſſion Pſal. iv. long met. ver. 4.
xxv. 22. A prayer.	An aſſertion. Pſal. xxv. third part. ver. 8.
xxviii. 7 An account of the pſalmiſt's paſt experience.	A prediction of what was to be his attainment.
—— 9. A prayer.	A conditional vow or reſolution.
xxxxvii. 1, 3, 4, 5. Exhortations.	Meditation or profeſſion. Pſal. xxxvii. firſt part, ver. 1, 3, 4.

In the Original.	In the Imitation.
Pſal. lii. 8. A profeſſion of the pſalmiſt's confidence in the Lord's mercy.	A general propoſition.
lv. 22. An exhortation.	A profeſſion or declaration of his preſent exerciſe. Pſal. lv. com. met. ver. 9.
lx. 4. A grateful acknowledgement of what the Lord had done for his people.	A prayer. Pſal. lx. 4.
lxii. 5. A ſoliloquy or addreſs to his ſoul.	An aſſertion. Pſal. lxii. 1.
lxxxix. 6. Spoken by the church in the form of an interrogation.	Spoken by the Father to the Son in the form of an aſſertion. Pſal. lxxxix. firſt part, long met. ver. 4.
cxliii. 11. 12. A prayer.	A deſcription of the heavenly happineſs. Pſal. cxliii. 12.

SECT. V. *Examples of the Arrangement or Method of the Pſalms being altered by the Imitator.*

THAT it was the deſign of the Holy Spirit, that we ſhould attend to the method he has been pleaſed to make uſe of in the ſcriptures, is evident, from the neceſſity of obſerving the arrangement and connexion of any diſcourſe, in order to the right underſtanding of it, from the light we obtain as to the meaning of a text, by a careful attention to the context, and from the dangerous errors into which many fall, by taking up with detached expreſſions, without conſidering their connexion with what goes before and what follows. All the ſcriptures having been dictated by the Holy Spirit, there is in every part of them, ſuch a diſpoſition of matter as is beſt adapted to his deſign. And therefore to ſuppoſe that a different diſpoſition of the matter of the pſalms is neceſſary, in order to render them fit for being read or ſung in public worſhip, is to ſuppoſe, that the pſalms, as they ſtand in the ſcriptures, were either not deſigned to be uſed in public worſhip, or not all dictated by the Holy Spirit. That ſuch was the ſuppoſition on which the Imitator proceeded, is evident from the method he uſes being frequently ſo different from that of the pſalmiſt.

Thus

Thus in the xxxi. pſalm, his firſt part puts together the 5, 13, 19, 22, 23 verſes; and his ſecond part the 7, 13, 18, 19, 20, 21.

In the xxxvii. we have, in the 2d part of the imitation, the 16, 21, 26, 30, 31 verſes, and in the 3d part, 23, 24, 28, 29, 34, 35, 36, 37.

In pſalm l. ſecond part, common metre, the 15 and 23 verſes are joined together; and in the third part, the 1, 5, 8, 16, 21 verſes.

In pſalm lxviii. the 1—6, 32—35 verſes are put together in one hymn, the 17 and 18 are wrought up into another; and the 19, 9, 20, 21, 22 verſes compoſe a third.

In pſalm lxxi. ver. 16 is joined to the laſt three verſes; and the intermediate ones come afterward into a ſeparate hymn.

In pſalm lxxxvii. any thing in the imitation that is like the laſt verſe, comes before the matter of the 5 and 6.

Pſalm cxix. is greatly tranſpoſed.

Pſalm cxxxv. is imitated in the following order: Ver. 1, 4, 14, 19, 5—12.

SECT. VI. *Verſes of the Pſalms omitted by the Imitator.*

THE verſes omitted occaſion a continual variation from the order and connexion of the original; often a different beginning, as in the xxxi. pſalm, and a different ending, as in the li. If we conſider the work of Dr. Watts as a verſion or tranſlation, as ſome have affected to call it, the deſigned omiſſion of ſo many verſes, renders it good for nothing. If we conſider it as a collection of as much of the book of Pſalms, as the Doctor thought fit for chriſtian worſhip, a reproach is caſt upon the remainder as unfit for it; although the wiſdom of God appointed the whole book to be uſed in his worſhip.

The following liſt is not given as complete, even as to whole verſes omitted by the imitator: And none of the parts of verſes omitted are ſpecified, though the ſame objection lies againſt the omiſſion of them.

A Liſt

A List of verses omitted in Dr. Watts's Imitation of the Psalms of David, corrected and enlarged by Joel Barlow.

Psalm	Verse
v	1, 2.
vii.	7.
x.	7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15.
xvii.	1——12.
xxvi.	11, 12.
xxxii.	8, 9, 10, 11.
xxxv.	10, 11, 16—28.
xxxvi.	10, 11, 12.
xxxvii.	17, 18, 19, 20.
xxxviii.	11, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20.
xl.	12——16.
xli.	4——13.
xliv.	4, 5, 6, 7, 9—14.
xlvii.	2, 3, 4.
xlix.	2, 3, 4, 5, 16, 17.
li.	6, 18, 19.
lv.	9——14.
lvii.	4, 6.
lviii.	3.
lx.	6, 7, 8, 9.
lxi.	7, 8.
lxii.	1, 2, 3, 4.
lxiii.	11.
lxviii.	7, 8, 10--16, 23, 24.
lxix.	22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28.
lxxi.	1—4, 10—13.
lxxiv.	5, 23.
lxxviii.	40——71.
lxxx.	18.
lxxxi.	2——7.
lxxxvi.	1—7, 14—17.
lxxxviii.	5—9.
xcii.	8.
xciv.	3, 4, 5, 6, 15.
xcvi.	3,—9.
cv.	16—26.
cviii.	7—13.
cix.	5—31.
cxvi.	9, 10, 11.
cxviii.	1--5, 13, 28.
cxix.	4, 6, 7, 8, 12, 17, 21, 23, 31, 43, 45, 47, 48, 52, 56, 65, 66, 77, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 95, 101, 102, 106, 108, 109, 117, 124, 126, 131, 134, 136, 137, 138, 139, 141, 142, 144, 145, 146, 149, 151, 152, 155, 157, 167, 168, 169, 172, 173.
cxxix.	8.
cxxxvii.	8, 9.
cxxxviii.	4, 5.
cxxxix.	19.
cxl.	6—11.
cxxli.	1, 7, 8, 9, 10.
cxliv.	7, 8, 9, 10, 11.
cl.	3, 4, 5.

SECT.

SECT. VII. *Metaphors and Similies of the Pſalms left out in the Imitation.*

THE omiſſion of theſe metaphors, whether plain language or other metaphors be ſubſtituted in their place, implies a diſhonourable reflection upon the author of the pſalms: For if plain language would anſwer the author's purpoſe as well, metaphors are unneceſſary and improper; and if other metaphors be preferable, the author has made a wrong choice. The omiſſion, therefore, of ſo many metaphors of the pſalms cannot be reconciled to a due reverence and eſteem of God's word. The Lord's people find the metaphors and ſimilies of his word incomparably fitter for ſetting forth ſpiritual things, incomparably more ſavoury and pregnant with inſtruction, than any other.

A Liſt of the Metaphors and Similies of the Pſalms left out in the Imitation, as corrected by Mr. Barlow.

Pſalm ii. 9, 12. Like a potter's veſſel. Kiſs the Son.
iii. 3, 7. Thou, O Lord, art a ſhield for me. Thou haſt ſmitten the cheek-bone, &c.
v. 9. Their throat is an open ſepulchre.
vii. 15. He made a pit, and digged it.
x. 9. He lieth in wait ſecretly, as a lion in his den.
xiii. 3. Enlighten mine eyes.
xiv. 4. Who eat up my people as bread.
xxi. 12. Thou ſhalt make ready thine arrows upon thy ſtrings
xxii. 14. I am poured out like water.
xxvii. 9. Lead me in a plain path.
xxxvii. 20. The enemies of the Lord ſhall be as the fat of lambs.
xxxviii. 5. My wounds ſtink and are corrupt becauſe of my fooliſhneſs.
13. I, as a deaf man, heard not, &c.
xli. 3. Thou wilt turn all his bed in his ſickneſs.
xlii. 7. Deep calleth unto deep at the noiſe of thy water-ſpouts.
10. As with a ſword in my bones,——mine enemies reproach me.

Pſalm

Psalm xliv. 3. Thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance.
19. Thou hast covered us with the shadow of death.
xlv. 8. All thy garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, &c.
14. The virgins, her companions that follow her, shall be brought unto thee.
xlix. 5. When the iniquity of my heels shall compass me.
li. 7. Purge me with hyssop.
lii. 2. Thy tongue deviseth mischief, like a sharp razor.
lv. 21. His words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords
lvii. 4. My soul is among lions.
lviii. 10. He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.
lx. 3. Thou hast made us drink the wine of astonishment.
lxiii. 5. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness.
lxvi. 11, 12. Thou broughtest us into a net: Thou laidest affliction upon our loins.
lxxii. 3. The mountains shall bring forth peace to the people, and the little hills by righteousness.
9. His enemies shall lick the dust.
14. Precious shall their blood be in his sight.
16. There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon.
lxxiv. 14. Thou gavest the leviathan to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.
lxxv. 3. I bear up the pillars of the land.
8. In the hand of the *Lord* is a cup; and the wine is red: It is full of mixture, &c.
lxxiii. 4. There are no bands in their death.
6. Pride compasseth them as a chain.
10 Waters of a full cup are wrung out to them.
21. I was pricked in my reins.

Pſalm lxxvii. 2. My ſore ran in the night.
lxxx. 2. Stir up thy ſtrength.
14. Look down from heaven, and behold, and viſit this vine.
lxxxi. 10. Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.
16. He would have fed them with the fineſt of the wheat.
lxxxii. 5. All the foundations of the earth are out of courſe.
lxxxii. 13. Make them [the enemies of Iſrael] like a wheel.
lxxxiv. 6. Paſſing through the valley of Baca, make it a well: The rain filleth the pools.
xcii. 10. My horn ſhalt thou exalt, like the horn of the unicorn.
12. The righteous ſhall flouriſh like the palm-tree.
xcviii. 8. Let the floods clap hands.
ciii. 5. Thy youth is renewed like the eagles.
cxii. 9. His horn ſhall be exalted with honour.
cxiii. 7. He lifteth the needy out of the dunghill.
cxxvii. 4. As arrows in the hand of a mighty man, ſo are the children of youth.
cxxviii. 3. Thy children, like olive plants, round about thy table.
cxxix. 3. The plowers plowed upon my back: They made long their furrows.
cxxxi. 1. Mine eyes are not lofty.
cxxxii 17. There will I make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp.
cxlviii. 14. He exalteth the horn of his people.

SECT. VIII. *Remarks on the Style of the Imitation.*

WHERE the purity of God's worſhip and ordinances is concerned, the ſtyle of a writer appears too ſmall a matter to deſerve attention. But as it is ſometimes ſuggeſted, that the uſe of Dr. Watts' imitation would render our public ſinging more agreeable to ſuch as have a taſte for elegance of ſtyle, the following remarks may, perhaps, tend to ſhew that, even in this reſpect, the advantage of introducing it would not be ſo great as it has been repreſented. Some impropriеties

improprieties in compoſition, that have occurred in the peruſal of the imitation, are pointed out under the following heads:

I. Ungrammatical Expreſſions.

1. Inſtances of impropriety in the application of words, and in the ſyntax.

Pſal. lxvi. 1ſt part, ver. 6. Ye ſaints fulfil his praiſe.
iii. com. met. 7. Fulfil thy grace.
lxxxiii. 6. Convince their madneſs.
xcii. 1ſt part, 5. I ſhall *ſhare a part.*
xxxvii. 3d part, 3. Bleſſings *long* to come.
lxxiii. ſhort met. 6. I *indulg'd* my doubts to riſe.
iv. long met. 5. Thy light and love we pray.
Inſtead of, we pray *for.*

2. Inſtances of improper circumlocution.

Pſal. lxv. 2d part, ver. 5. He ſettles in a peaceful form.
vi. long met. 5. My thoughts are tempted.
xxxvi. com. met. 1. Their thoughts believe.
For *in peace, I am tempted, they believe.*

3. Inſtances of tautology, or ſuperfluity of words.

Pſal. cxxxix. 1ſt part, long m. ver. 4. Amazing knowledge *vaſt* and *great.*
Ibid, c. met. ver. 4. Within thy *circling* arms I lie, *Incloſ'd on every ſide.*
lxxi. 2d part, 6. His death—has ſav'd me *by his blood.*
xlix. 6. Though dragons roar *with their breath.*
lxi. 2. The rock that's high *above my head.*

II. The abuſe of Figures and Metaphors.

1. Inſtances of perſonification that ſeem abſurd.

Pſal. lxxxv. 3. We wait for *praiſe to tune our voice.*
cxix. part 6th, 3. My *thoughts* in holy wonder *riſe,*
And *bring their thanks* to thee.

2. Inſtances

2. Inſtances of metaphors incongruouſly heaped upon one another.

Pſal. xl. 1ſt part, 2. And from my bonds releas'd my feet,
Deep bonds of miry clay.
lx. 2. Thy *frowning mantle* ſpreads the ſky.

Let the reader try to conceive a picture of deep bonds of clay, or of a frowning mantle.

3. Inſtances in which the figure and plain expreſſion are improperly mixed.

Pſal. xlviii. 2d part, ver. 5. Rites adorn'd with gold.
li. long met. 2d part, 6. No Jewiſh *types* could *cleanſe* me ſo.
viii. com. met. 7. The *fleſhly cloud.*
cxxxix. 2d p. l. m. 4. The finiſh'd members of the mind.

III. What Swift calls the *Art of Sinking* is exemplified in this Imitation.

Pſal. xix. 1ſt part, ver. 3. They ſhew the *wonders* of his hand,
And orders of his throne.
xxii. 1ſt p. c. met. 8. They nail my hands, they pierce my feet,
And *try* to vex my heart.
cxxxvii. 2. Let dire deſtruction ſeize this guilty frame,
My *hand* ſhall periſh and my *voice* ſhall ceaſe.

IV. Low Expreſſion, Puerile Conceits, and a Manner of Expreſſion bordering on the Burleſque.

1. Inſtances of expreſſion too low for the ſubject.

Pſal. xvi. 1ſt part, c. m. 5. He gives me ſweet advice by day,
And gentle hints by night.
xlv. 1ſt part, l. met. 3. Dreſs thee in arms.
lxv. 3d part, 1. Viſits the paſtures every ſpring.
lxxv. 5. Nor can the wind ſuch bleſſings blow.

Pſal.

Psal. cxxxiii. com. met. 1. Lo, what an entertaining sight,
These friendly brethren prove.

2. Instances of puerile conceits.

Psal. xxii. long met. ver. 5. They wound his head, his hands, his feet,
Till streams of blood each other meet.

cxix. part 1st, 2. With their whole *heart* they seek the Lord,
And serve him with their *hands.*

Ibid, part 5th, 6. Sailors rejoice to *lose* their *fears.*

3. Sometimes Hudibras seems to be imitated rather than David.

Psal. xxii. long. m. 4. O savage people! cruel priests!
How they stood round like raging beasts.

lxxiv. 5. How are the seats of worship broke!
They tear the buildings down.

lxxxix. l. m. 2. Are not thy servants day by day,
Sent to their graves and turn'd to clay?

V. Passages that have little or no Meaning.

Psal. xxix. 3. The *fearful hart and frighted hind,*
Leap at the terror of the sound.

civ. 8. From pleasant trees which shade the brink,
The lark and linnet *light to drink.*

VI. Rant and Extravagance.

Psal. cxxxix. 1st p. c. m. 8. I fly beyond the west.

cxlvii. long. met. 1. Let heaven begin the solemn word,
And sound it dreadful down to hell.

Jam satis.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

VINDICIÆ CANTUS DOMINICI.

PART II.

Being a VINDICATION of the DOCTRINE taught in the preceding DISCOURSE.

CHAP. I.

Of SINGING in SOLEMN WORSHIP.

GOD is worshipped really and materially in ejaculatory prayer, in meditation, in an habitual endeavour to conform our conversation to the rule of his word. From this material and habitual worship, acts or exercises of immediate and formal worship are distinguished in the following respects: 1. A formal act or exercise of divine worship always implies a previous design of employing a certain portion of time in it. But material worship is just that habitual regard to God, or expressions of it, which ought to run through and sanctify our whole conversation. 2. All the acts of solemn or formal worship come under the denomination of religion; and therefore are all to be found most particularly described, and expresly appointed in the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testament. But it is not necessary, to constitute an act of material worship, at least the outward part of it, that it be an act peculiarly belonging to religion, or that it be particularly and expresly prescribed in the scriptures,

ſcriptures, but only that it be not forbidden. Thus, a man's going to Jeruſalem, if his journey be from right principles and to right ends, might be accounted an inſtance of material worſhip, in the ſame ſenſe in which plowing or ſowing is ſo. But the popiſh conſideration of it, as formal worſhip, is groſly ſuperſtitious. Thus, there may be ſome uſe of hymns of human compoſure; becauſe neither the compoſing nor the reading of them is forbidden.* Such compoſitions in verſe as Mr. Ralph Erſkine's Sonnets, are very uſeful: Principles or precepts in verſe both ſtrike the reader more ſtrongly at firſt, and are more eaſily retained by him afterwards. But ſtill they cannot be warrantably ſung in ſolemn and formal worſhip, whilſt there is no appointment of them to that particular purpoſe in ſcripture. 3. Formal acts of worſhip are means of divine appointment for promoting that which is material or habitual. Hence it is neceſſary for chriſtians to obſerve this diſtinction, whilſt in the preſent militant ſtate; the moſt advanced in habitual worſhip having need of the means and ordinances of ſolemn worſhip. There will be no ſuch diſtinction in the exerciſe of the ſaints in heaven; which will be one continued eternal exerciſe of immediate worſhip.

Singing in *public* worſhip is more frequently mentioned in the preceding diſcourſe, becauſe that part of the ſubject ſeemed to be more immediately in debate, and alſo becauſe public worſhip ought to be an example and pattern for that which is private; nor ought any other forms of pſalmody to be uſed in ſolemn and formal worſhip in private, than what are uſed in public.

CHAP.

* In the preſent controverſy, the queſtion is not, Whether it be warrantable for chriſtians to exerciſe their talents in writing poems on religious ſubjects; and thus to communicate their knowledge of revealed truth or ſpiritual experience for the edification of others? Hence, if Mr. Lata meant ſuch compoſitions, it was highly impertinent to bid his opponents prove, that it was "the duty of chriſtians not to draw the doctrine and admonitions "which they communicate to one another in pſalms and hymns, "from the doctrines and diſcourſes of Chriſt and his apoſtles, but "from the words of David and Aſaph." *Diſcourſe on Pſalmody.*

CHAP. II.

Shewing that there are Forms of Pſalmody in Scripture, which God hath appointed to be uſed in the Solemn Worſhip of the Church.

THE ſecond propoſition which was laid down in the preceding diſcourſe is, *That there are portions of the ſacred ſcriptures adapted to the purpoſe of ſinging, which ought to be uſed in the worſhip of the church, till the end of time:* For the explanation of this propoſition four obſervations were offered; which have occaſioned our inquiry into a variety of intereſting ſubjects.

SECT. I. *Of the particular Parts of Scripture which ought to be Sung in the Solemn Worſhip of the Church.*

THE firſt of the obſervations now mentioned was, that *there are portions of ſcripture peculiarly adapted to the purpoſe of ſinging in ſolemn worſhip.*

It is objected to what is ſaid on this obſervation, in the diſcourſe, "That though the obſervation be true in itſelf, "the diſcourſe goes wrong in pointing out what parts of "ſcripture ought to be ſung."

Anſwer. The poſition itſelf being granted, all is granted which the writer intended in this part of his ſubject; becauſe he apprehended, that the queſtion was not, Whether this or another part of ſcripture ſhould be ſung in ſolemn worſhip? but, Whether ſome parts of ſcripture literally tranſlated, or human compoſitions, ſhould be ſo uſed?

The objector adds, "The writer of that diſcourſe has "raiſed a horrid outcry about attempts to corrupt the di-"vine ordinance of ſinging pſalms; but he is not explicit in "declaring what the church ought to ſing in public worſhip; "he, therefore, adds to the corruption of that ordinance."

Anſwer. It is unreaſonable to expect more of any writer, than what falls within the compaſs of his declared deſign. The diſcourſe in queſtion combats two things, which the writer

writer considered as corruptions in the public praises, namely the disuse therein of literal translations of the psalms, and the substituting of human compositions in their place.

These he distinctly pointed out. But that about which, according to the objector, the discourse is not explicit, seemed not to be the point immediately in dispute.

Were it once granted however, that the whole book of psalms is proper to be sung in our solemn worship; and that nothing is so but compositions bearing the title of songs, which are found in the inspired scriptures; we might then proceed to another question, namely, Whether any other parts of scripture than the book of psalms ought to be used in our solemn worship? This could hardly occasion any great difference among the sincere lovers of the purity of God's ordinances.

The writer of the discourse specified the book of psalms, because this is plainly the question under consideration, Whether the church, under the New Testament dispensation, ought to sing these psalms? These make up the far greater part of scripture-songs. If these be discarded, we have no system of psalmody in the bible.

Supposing it to be granted, that nothing ought to be sung in solemn worship but literal translations of the sacred scripture, the two following observations may be of use in determining what portions of it ought to be fixed on for that purpose.

The first is, That no portions of scripture ought to be sung in solemn worship, but such as, in their form, are poetical, that is, such as are entitled psalms, songs, or hymns, having the sentences commonly divided into corresponding, and often equal members, and perhaps distinguished in the Hebrew original of the Old Testament by the metrical punctuation. The other observation is, That we ought to be directed in this matter by the divinely authorized example of the church of God in her ordinary solemn worship, recorded in the scriptures. We have seen that there are psalms or songs delivered to the church of God to be sung in her ordinary solemn worship; and that we read of her using these, but not of her using any other in that worship.

Here we allow, that the poetical form of composition may be used in some parts of scripture for other purposes than that

that of being ſung in the ordinary ſolemn worſhip of the church. Hence we do not ſay, that the books of Job and the Proverbs ought to be ſung in that worſhip. Whatever is ſung ought to be in the poetical form; but whatever is in the poetical form (as Milton's Paradiſe loſt) is not intended to be ſung. That form may have been uſed in theſe books by the Holy Spirit on ſome other account; ſuch as, that it is beſt adapted to the matter of theſe books, and is moſt helpful to the memory. Thus, we do not ſay, that the ſongs ought to be ſung in the ordinary ſolemn worſhip of the church, which we find interwoven in the ſeries of ſcripture-hiſtory, and which exhibit the ſpiritual exerciſe of ſuch a ſaint on ſuch an occaſion; as is the caſe of the ſong of Deborah, that of Hannah, or David's lamentation over Saul and Jonathan; as alſo of the ſongs of Mary, of Zacharias and Eliſabeth; or the ſongs which we meet with in the book of Iſaiah or the Revelation: For theſe are to be conſidered as rather repreſenting the frame and exerciſe, to which the Lord hath brought, or will bring his church and people, hiſtorically or prophetically, than as preſcribing a form of words to be ſung in ſolemn worſhip. The judicious Mr. Boſton indeed, in his Tractatus Stigmologicus, p. 6, thinks, that the ſongs of Moſes, of Solomon, and of Hezekiah, &c. were deſigned to be ſung in ſolemn worſhip as well as the pſalms, they being, as he obſerves, expreſly called ſongs by the Holy Spirit. But he alſo obſerves, that they are pointed, not with the metrical accentuation uſed in the pſalms, the Proverbs, and the book of Job, but with the ſame proſaic accentuation uſed in the text which is purely hiſtorical. Now as he allows, page 8, that the metrical accentuation has ſome relation to the muſic or ſinging in ſolemn worſhip, we may ſuggeſt, with all deference to the judgment of that moſt excellent author, that the want of the metrical accentuation in the ſongs juſt now mentioned, ſeems to be rather againſt the opinion of their being recorded in order to be uſed in ſolemn worſhip, in the ſame manner as the pſalms. Another thing, which he alſo takes notice of, page 6, namely, that the xviiith and the cvth pſalms have the proſaic accentuation, as they ſtand in 2 Sam. xxii. and 1 Chron. xvi. and the metrical as they ſtand in the book of pſalms, ſeems to indicate, that the ſongs of the

ſaints

saints inserted in the historical books are intended to be read as a part of the sacred history, but that, being inserted in the book of psalms, they are appointed to be sung in solemn worship. It may be further suggested, that as there is nothing in the manner of writing in the Greek language parallel to the metrical accentuation of the Hebrew scriptures; so it is rational to suppose, that some such numbers as those of the Greek poets would have been made use of in recording the songs of Mary, of Zacharias and of Simeon, had they been designed to be forms of psalmody.

In short it appears, that, in determining what parts of scripture ought to be sung in solemn worship, we are to be directed by the poetical form of some parts of scripture, as we have already defined it; by the psalms or songs being delivered to the church, not merely in the series of history or prophecy, but in an insulated or unconnected state, accompanied with intimations of their being designed to be sung in solemn worship; and lastly, by the approved example of the church in her ordinary solemn worship, recorded in scripture.

It is a fundamental principle of our holy religion, that all scripture is given by inspiration of God. Hence, though one place of scripture may afford more light with respect to a particular case than another, yet there is no part of scripture that is of greater authority than another. Nor will the infinite wisdom of its Author allow us to suppose that any part of it is unnecessary. The whole scripture is equally to be regarded as the word of God, indited by his Spirit. Indeed the scripture contains many sinful suggestions of Satan, of wicked men, and of remaining corruption in the saints. But these are no less necessary in their place; and, considered as authentic and absolutely exact representations of the nature and operations of sin, they bear an expression of divinity as well as the other parts of scripture. Hence we are to beware of magnifying one part of scripture to the disparagement of another; or of inferring the inferiority of any of the sacred books from the supposed inferiority of the penmen; as if they had not all the same Omnificent God for their Author.

The writer of the Discourse on Psalmody seems to have been little aware of this, when, speaking against what he supposes an undue estimation of the psalms, he says, "The "blessed

" bleſſed Jeſus has revealed the nature, works and will of " God, in a clearer, fuller and more authoritative manner, " than it was poſſible for any of the human race to do." Are we then to conſider the pſalms as a revelation made by ſome of the human race? Does not God reveal himſelf in the ſame authoritative manner in the whole ſcriptures? Did not the ſame Spirit ſpeak by David that afterwards ſpake by Chriſt and his apoſtles? Does not ſuch a way of ſpeaking as this writer uſes, lead his readers to regard no other authority in the ſcriptures than that of the perſons who ſpoke and wrote them? Moſt certainly it does: For if it be allowed that the Holy Spirit was as well acquainted with the myſteries of the goſpel, when he ſpoke by David, as when he ſpoke by Chriſt and his apoſtles; then the inferiority of the pſalms cannot be inferred from the ſuperiority of Chriſt and his apoſtles to David. If ſome point of truth is not ſo largely inſiſted on in the pſalms, as in the New Teſtament, the reaſon is, not that ſuch a point of truth was not perfectly known to the Divine Author of the pſalms; but that the full declaration of that point is more fitly placed in the New Teſtament. Though it were allowed that the penmen of the pſalms had but " obſcure, tranſient and diſtant glimp- " ſes of our Saviour's glory;" yet this does not affect the pſalms, which were dictated by the Spirit of Chriſt, as well as the books of the New Teſtament.

This author alſo attempts to charge thoſe who contend for the uſe of David's pſalms, with preferring them to other parts of ſcripture, and particularly to the New Teſtament: " For," ſays he, " why ſhould the New Teſtament be whol- " ly degraded from bearing a part in the moſt agreeable, " the moſt devout part of our public worſhip, if the words " of David and Aſaph were not preferred before it?"

The anſwer to this queſtion is obvious. We ſing the book of pſalms in ſolemn worſhip, not becauſe we prefer this book to thoſe of the New Teſtament, but becauſe in the former, and not in the latter, we have thoſe forms of pſalmody which God gave and appointed to be uſed in his worſhip. We eſteem the books of the New Teſtament, in the form wherein they are delivered to us, as no leſs divinely excellent, than the words of David and Aſaph, in the form

wherein they are delivered to us.* Both having been dictated by the same Spirit, are of the same authority. But the form of the psalms has a manifest relation to singing in solemn worship. This relation, and not any opinion of the superiority of one part of scripture to another, is our reason for contending that the psalms or songs of scripture, and not other parts of it, ought to be sung in solemn and formal worship.†

SECT. II. *Whether the Words of the Psalms, literally and justly translated, be of Divine Authority? Or whether they exhibit the Form as well as the Matter of the inspired Psalms?*

IT has been said, "that there neither is, nor can be any "such thing as the inspired forms of the psalms in our lan- "guage, unless an immediate revelation were made in that "language: That it is not possible to retain the words and "phrases of the original in any translation: That as a pro- "phet is to speak in the language which is suggested to "him, his words are justly called the words of the Holy "Ghost; but that whenever a translation of that subject "is made into any other language, the words of the lan- "guage,

* When a portion of Paul's epistles, for example, is wrought into a psalm or hymn; though the epistle from which the matter of it is taken, be formally divine, we cannot allow the hymn, as such, to be so. The Holy Spirit gave it as part of an epistle, and not an hymn. There is a stamp by which the books of scripture are distinguished from human writings, even in their very form.

† The writer of this dares not flatter himself that the views expressed in this section will meet with the approbation of some who cordially agree with him, that no other than literal translations of some part of the inspired scriptures ought to be sung in solemn worship. With such he is far from wishing to dispute. Such he considers as, in the main, friends to the cause which he endeavours to defend. He thinks, however, that this cause cannot well be supported without allowing, that when we distinguish between the poetical and other parts of scripture, we make no distinction but what the scripture itself makes; and also that the poetical parts have a greater relation to the exercise of singing in divine worship than the other parts.

" guage, into which it is tranſlated, are no more the words " of the Holy Ghoſt, than Greek is Engliſh."*

Anſwer. There is a manifeſt want of candor here. It is true, the term *word* is ſometimes uſed for a ſound or combination of ſounds peculiar to this or the other language. But the objector could hardly be ignorant that *dabar* in Hebrew, ρημα and λογος in Greek, or *word* in Engliſh, is uſed for the thing enunciated, the particular ſound that is employed not being conſidered. Thus, when it is ſaid, *The words of the pure are pleaſant words*, nobody ſuppoſes there is any reference here to the particular ſounds of one language more than to thoſe of another. Thus, *terminus vocalis*, or vocal term, in logic, ſignifies an idea enunciated or expreſſed, without any conſideration of the particular ſounds made uſe of in expreſſing it. So in univerſal grammar, as well as in that of a particular language, authors treat of words, of their claſſes, and of ſyntax or conſtruction. Nor is any body at a loſs to underſtand the diſtinction between a tranſlation which profeſſes to give us the ſenſe only, and another, in which it is endeavoured, as much as poſſible, to give the words of the original. Horace ſays of a writer,

Serpit humi, tutus nimium, timiduſque procellæ.

The ſenſe is expreſſed in the following lines of Roſcommon:

Some tim'rous wretches ſtart at every blaſt,
And, fearing tempeſts, dare not leave the ſhore.

Theſe

* An Examination, &c. page 21, 22. This pretence, that the words of ſcripture, when tranſlated, are not the words of the Holy Spirit, has been much employed by ſome ſubtle papiſts to deſtroy the credit of the ſcripture, and to drive ſimple inconſiderate ſouls to their viſible and infallible interpreter, whether that interpreter be the pope, or a council, or the pope and council united. It was urged, particularly by Boſſuet and other popiſh writers in France, in order to pervert carnal and unſtable proteſtants at the time of the revocation of the edict of Nantz. And no doubt their impious ſophiſtry contributed to the bringing forth of that monſtrous brood of atheiſts, who are the diſgrace of France and of the preſent age.

It may be added here, that on the ſame pretence, papiſts have often committed tranſlations of the bible to the flames.

Theſe two lines are elegant, but do not give us the words (or each of the particular ideas) of Horace; which we have in the following tranſlation: "Too cautious and fearful of the ſtorm, he creeps on the ground." This verbal manner, it is owned, is often aukward and unneceſſary in tranſlating the claſſics; becauſe the tranſlator, having a competent underſtanding of the ſubject, may often expreſs what is meant as well in his own way as in that of his author. But the caſe of tranſlating the ſacred ſcriptures is infinitely different. There every word is divine. Therefore the tranſlator is not at liberty to alter a ſingle word, or the relation in which it ſtands to thoſe which go before or follow it. His whole buſineſs is to find out the word of the language into which he tranſlates, which, in ſignification, moſt exactly correſponds with the Hebrew or Greek word; and to repreſent with the ſame exactneſs, the relation in which it ſtands to thoſe which attend it.*

The

* The author of an Examination, &c. p. 21. having quoted a paſſage of the Diſcourſe on the duty of ſinging the book of pſalms, immediately adds, "This is perfectly ſelf-contradictory. It is "abſolutely, totally, and univerſally impoſſible in the nature of "things." To be ſure, theſe words pronounced with vociferation and proper looks and geſtures, might have ſome effect upon an audience; but they muſt appear very pitiful to a reader, who looks for nothing but cool reaſoning. It is hard to account for this paragraph, otherwiſe than by ſuppoſing, that the author had not allowed himſelf time and compoſure for apprehending what he here pretends to refute. For, in the firſt place, what he ſays about the words of one language not being the words of another, is a mere quibble; for which he found that the ambiguity of the term *words* afforded him ſome handle. He has another quibble, equally contemptible, about retaining the arrangement of the original in a tranſlation, which he affects to ridicule by a pretended literal tranſlation of Luke vi. 6. He ſpeaks as if a tranſlator's ſtudying in a rational manner to retain the order of ideas in the original, were inconſiſtent with a due regard to the idioms both of the language from which, and of that into which he tranſlates. In ſhort, the quibbling and miſconſtruction of terms in which the author deals here, are what the language of the paſſage which he pretends to refute, had given no juſt occaſion for: No uncommon phraſes were uſed; for every body ſpeaks of verbal tranſlations, and of tranſlating word for word. In the ſecond place, he neither lays before the reader the reaſoning that had been uſed in the Diſcourſe, nor attempts to refute it. He ſays, indeed, "That

The fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh sections of the second number of the Appendix to the Discourse on Singing Psalms, served further to ascertain what was meant by adhering to the forms as well as the matter of the psalms; namely, that a translator

"That the very reason why any word is fit, is because it is calculated to represent the idea or express the meaning." But this is the very reason why a strictly literal translation is, in the Discourse, preferred to a free one: Because, in what is called a free translation, the words do not exactly represent the ideas which those of the original represent; as is plain from the example quoted from Roscommon. The idea of a free translation are supposed, justly or unjustly, to be the same in effect; but they are not pretended to be, as they are in a literal translation, the same formally and taken one by one. Hence it is said, in the Discourse, that he who translates the scriptures literally, shews a becoming regard to the choice which the wisdom of God has made of words to express what he has been pleased to reveal to us. Our author adds, "If a speaker or writer could communicate his ideas in twenty "different forms of expressions, equally answering his intention, "it would be perfectly indifferent which of the forms he chose." But the question is not concerning a speaker or writer in general, but concerning a translator in particular. Were a person to proceed in translating according to what is here said by the author of the Examination, he would attempt to rival his author, rather than to translate him; since, upon that supposition, he might fix on a form of expression which would equally answer the intention of the author with that which the author had chosen; as if one, who had undertaken to translate a dialogue of Lucian, should drop the form of dialogue, supposing that another form might equally answer the intention of the author. His work, in this case, could not with any propriety be called a translation. There is a great difference between translating and explaining or giving the sense of an author. A Greek scholar, who knows nothing of geometry, may translate a proposition of Euclid; but he cannot explain it, like one, who, though ignorant of the Greek, is a skilful geometrician. A Socinian acquainted with the Hebrew language, may translate the 53d chapter of Isaiah very justly; but there is no illiterate serious christian, who has found relief to his soul in the death of his Redeemer, that would commit such gross blunders in giving the sense of it. We may only add here, that one need not hesitate to say, it would be impious for a person, who pretends to translate the scriptures, to use another form of expression than that of the original; I egging, that his own form would equally answer the intention of the Holy Spirit, and, that it is perfectly indifferent which of the forms he chose.

lator of them ought not to alter the form of discourse; that he should not turn a prayer, for example, into an affirmation; that he should not alter the arrangement; that each verse should be connected with no other matter in the translation, than it is connected with in the original; that no verses or members of verses should be omitted; that he should not leave out or change the metaphors.

We do not say, that the form of any part of sacred scripture is ever so perfect in any translation, as it is in the standard of all the translations of scripture, the original Hebrew of the Old Testament and Greek of the New. Hence the absurdity of putting the Septuagint, the vulgar Latin, the Arabic, or any other translation, upon a level with the Hebrew and Greek original. But we do assert, so far as the words of any translation are, in signification and arrangement, exactly answerable to those of the Hebrew or Greek, not only the matter, but the form is divine: The words are as really the words of the Holy Ghost as the Hebrew or Greek words; and that the contrary opinion is a dangerous error. This doctrine is established by such considerations as the following:

1. The translated words of the Old Testament are called in the New, the *words of the prophets*, or *the sayings of the Holy Spirit*, John xii. 38. *That the saying*, or word, ὁ λόγος, *of Isaias the prophet, might be fulfilled, which he said, Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* Acts xv. 15, 16. *And to this agree the words of the prophets, as it is written, After this I will return, &c.* Heb. iii. 7. *Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day if ye will hear his voice.* The apostle afterwards calls our attention to the Greek word Σήμερον to-day, as no less the word of the Holy Ghost than the Hebrew word *Haiom*, ver. 13. compared with Psal. xcv. 7. Another instance is remarkable, in the 12th chap. of the same book. *Now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, once more, signifieth the removing, &c.* Thus the words of the Old Testament, translated in the New, are called the words of the prophets, and of the Holy Ghost who spoke by them: And this warrants us to call the translated psalms the words of David, and of the Holy Ghost who spoke by him. We speak with sufficient exactness, when we speak with the scriptures.

2. The

2. There is in the words of scripture, exactly translated into any language, a divine propriety or fitness to express the things of the Spirit of God, which it would be blasphemy to ascribe to any other words, and which fully evidences them to be the words of the Holy Ghost; the very words which his infinite wisdom pitched upon for expressing the truth contained in them. This may be illustrated by an example. When I read these words of the apostle, *He hath made him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*, I believe, that, by these words, I am taught, that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us for our justification; as our sin was imputed to him, that he might make satisfaction for it to the justice of God. This is my poor imperfect way of expressing what is undoubtedly contained in the text. But the text itself expresses this and other truths contained in it with infinitely greater propriety. To this purpose, Dr. Owen in the eighth chapter of his discourse on the causes, ways and means of understanding the mind of God revealed in his word, has these words: "The principal matter of scripture is mysterious, "and the mysteries of it are laid up therein by God himself, "and that in a way inimitable by the skill or wisdom of "men. When we speak or express the same things accor- "ding to our measure of comprehension; wherein, from its "agreement with the scripture, what we say is materially "divine; yet our words are not so; nor is there the same "respect to the things themselves, as the expressions of scrip- "ture have, which are formally divine." "The whole aim," says Witsius in his Miscellanea Sacra, "of our comments on "scripture should be, not to exchange the words of the "Lord for our words, as if we foolishly thought our words "better than his; but to manifest the wisdom of the divine "manner of expression: Unless we attain this, let us con- "fess our unskilfulness and ignorance of the sacred lan- "guage. For if we would not overthrow the divine author- "ity of the holy scriptures, we must firmly maintain, that the "words thereof are the words of God; and to ascribe to "them any impropriety, which may need correction, is "downright profaneness and horrid blasphemy."*

3. It is necessary to distinguish between the words of scripture and the doctrines which are deduced from them as the sense

ſenſe of them. For example, from John vi. 34. *No man can come unto me except the Father, who hath ſent me, draw him;* thoſe who hold the Calviniſtic doctrine teach, that no one, who partakes of *that ſort* of grace which is here called *drawing*, can fall ſhort of ſaving faith, true holineſs, and everlaſting ſalvation. Arminians, on the other hand, maintain, that many who partake of the ſame ſort of grace, ſhall, in the iſſue, periſh; the ſaving effect of it being hindered by man's free will. How are we to proceed in judging of theſe oppoſite doctrines? Why, in the firſt place, we muſt allow, that neither the words of the former of theſe propoſitions, nor thoſe of the latter, are like the words of the text, of divine authority. In the next place, in order to determine whether the Calviniſtic doctrine be contained in this text, it is neceſſary to conſider whether it be moſt agreeable to the emphaſis of the words, to the context, and to other places of ſcripture. In the whole inquiry, the principle we proceed upon is, that the words of the text are formally divine; and, in that reſpect, are to be carefully diſtinguiſhed from the words we make uſe of to expreſs what we judge to be the doctrine contained in the text. If chriſtians who are unacquainted with the original languages have not the words of the Holy Ghoſt; if they have nothing but the ſenſe of tranſlators; then they have no ſtandard by which to judge of doctrines. They may, indeed, judge whether one human ſenſe or interpretation be agreeable to another; but they know not whether any of them be agreeable to an infallible ſtandard; becauſe, upon this ſuppoſition, they have no ſuch ſtandard, there being no other than *the words* of the Holy Spirit in the ſcriptures. Thus thoſe who do not underſtand the original languages, are incapacitated for exerciſing any judgment or diſcretion about the doctrines they hear, or for diſtinguiſhing between truth and error. Nor will it be much better even with thoſe that underſtand theſe languages. For it is hardly poſſible for the beſt ſcholar, who has been accuſtomed to think in a modern language, to judge any otherwiſe of a text, than according to his own tranſlation; and then, it ſeems, he judges as little according to the words of the Holy Spirit, as the unlearned do. Thus the benefit of revelation is reduced to nothing. We muſt even take up with our own wiſdom or reaſon, as the only

rule

rule to direct us in judging what is truth or what is error. What is called revelation may, indeed, upon this supposition, supply reason with more materials to work upon, which the writings of Plato and Cicero may also do; it supplies a number of doctrines or notions; but no sure foundations to rest upon in believing any of them: For nothing can be such but the words of the Holy Spirit in the scriptures; which, translate them into what language you please, still manifest themselves to be his own words, and constitute one common infallible standard, by which the unlearned, as well as the learned, may distinguish the truth from the most plausible errors, which the wit of men or the craft of Satan can devise.

4. The formal reason of saving faith, or of that persuasion which the Lord works in the hearts of sinners, concerning the truth of a particular doctrine as affording a solid rest for eternity, is just this, That the words in which it is delivered to us, are the words of God, who cannot lie. Hence that representation of saving faith in the first epistle to the Thessalonians, ii. 13. *When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.* Faith is our hearing the voice of the Son of God; our setting to our seal that God is true. Hence in the prophets these words are continually repeated, *Thus saith the Lord,* or *the Lord hath spoken.* Hereby we are taught that no words can be the foundation of a divine faith, but such as are formally the words of God. "The mind of "God," says Dr. Owen, "being now committed to writing, "God is to be regarded by every individual of mankind, "to whom the scriptures come, as speaking to him no less "immediately, than if he heard his voice, as Adam said he "heard it in the garden. Though this voice could not "strike the ear but by means of the air in which it was "formed, yet it was not improper to call it a voice immediately from God. In like manner, his word may be "considered as his immediate voice to us, though it be "transmitted by writing. Abraham did not doubt that it "was indeed the voice of God which gave the probatory "command about sacrificing his son, and therefore without "hesitation he set himself to obey it. So the authority of "God speaking in the scriptures, the voice therein be-

"ing

" ing apprehended with irresistible evidence to be indeed " his voice, is found to be the highest obligation to faith " and obedience."* Hence the doctor says in another place, " He who applies himself to the study of the holy " scriptures, should, in the first place, have a sense of his " nearness to God deeply fixed in his mind, that he may " be filled with reverence of the divine majesty and author- " ty, with submission and abasement of heart. For in the " holy scriptures, God speaks to the reader no less imme- " diately, than if he spoke by a voice from heaven. He is " despised, unless holy reverence and godly fear possess the " mind of the reader. He dwells with those that tremble " at his word: But a light and desultory manner of reading " the scriptures is the plague of men's souls, directly tending " to atheism."†

5. In the saving manifestations that God has made of himself to men by means of the scripture, they have had the clearest views of the words of it being the very words of God. When the Lord is pleased to shine on their souls in the reading of the scriptures, do they not discern something divine in the energy of the words, in the order and disposition of them, and in the richness and suitableness of the metaphors and similies? Do they not find one thing following another in a manner suitable to their case, and to what is manifestly the design of the Holy Spirit in the passage, as fills them with wonder, and convinces them that the very manner of the scriptures is as much superior to the manner of mere human composition, as the fabric of the universe is to any of the works of human art? Some conviction of this may be attained by such a diligent attention to the language and manner of the scriptures as man's natural understanding is still capable of; a conviction which is sufficient to vindicate the experience of true believers in this matter from the charge of enthusiasm: Though it must be allowed to fall as far short of a divine faith, and the saving experience which accompanies it, as the pleasure of seeing the picture of a man whom we peculiarly esteem, falls short of the pleasure of seeing and conversing with the man himself.

Though

* Theologoumena, lib. iv. cap. 2. § 6.

† Idem. lib. vi. cap. 9. § 25.

Though all true believers have a deep and abiding ſenſe of the power and authority by which the words of the Holy Spirit are diſtinguiſhed from all other words; yet there are various degrees of this experience in different believers, and in the ſame believer at different times. On ſome occaſions it has been very remarkable and aſtoniſhing. Junius gives this account of his converſion: While he was yet thoughtleſs of the concerns of his ſoul, having a mind one day, to read ſomething in the ſcriptures, he opened the book at the firſt chapter of the goſpel of John. He read; he was aſtoniſhed; his mind was filled with an overpowering ſenſe of the divinity of the matter, and of the majeſty and authority of the words. During the remainder of the day, ſays he, I could think of nothing elſe. Biſhop Burnet gives us the following account from the mouth of the Earl of Rocheſter: "When Mr. Pearſon was reading to him the 53d chapter "of Iſaiah, he felt an inward force upon him, which did ſo "enlighten his mind, and convince him, that he could reſiſt "it no longer; for the WORDS HAD AN AUTHORITY which "did ſhoot like rays or beams in his mind. So that he was "not only convinced by the reaſoning which ſatisfied his "underſtanding; but by a power which did ſo effectually "conſtrain him, that he did ever after as firmly believe in "his Saviour, as if he had ſeen him in the clouds. He had "made this chapter be read to him ſo often, that he had "got it by heart. He would deſcant upon particular ex-"preſſions in this manner: *Who hath believed our report?* "Here, ſaid he, was foretold the oppoſition the goſpel was "to meet with from ſuch wretches as I was," &c.

The pious and judicious Mr. Halyburton, in his Memoirs, obſerves, That though God make uſe of the words of men for leading into the meaning of his own; yet when he found the word had done good, it was uſually God's own word in the ſcripture introduced in his ſermons. A remark that deſerves the particular attention of both miniſters and their hearers.

6. The forms of ſpeaking, ſuch as exhortation, declaration, prayer; the order and connexion of verſes; the metaphors, in an exact verbal tranſlation of the ſcriptures, are either of divine inſpiration, or they are not. If theſe be not of divine inſpiration in ſuch a tranſlation, then they are not

not ſo even in the original text; becauſe it is undeniable, that they are preciſely the ſame in both. And if theſe be not of divine inſpiration, then is the bible, even as we have it in the original languages, not ſo. For ſurely whoever is the author of any compoſition, is the author of the forms of ſpeaking uſed in it; the author of the order and connexion of the parts; of the metaphors and ſimilies. And if God is not the author of the ſcriptures, then have we no divine revelation. On the other hand, if the forms of ſpeaking, the order and connexion of the verſes, the metaphors and ſimilies be of divine inſpiration; then ſo far as theſe things, which belong to the form of the ſcriptures, are accurately preſerved in any tranſlation, the very form of the ſcripture thus tranſlated, is ſo far divinely inſpired; and the ſcripture-ſongs, thus tranſlated, may juſtly be called inſpired ſongs, in oppoſition to pretended imitations of them, in which the particulars, now mentioned, are manifeſtly neglected.

We may argue in the ſame manner with reſpect to the words of ſcripture in general, that they are either the words of the Holy Spirit in an exact verbal tranſlation, or they are not ſo in the original text: For if the nouns in the tranſlation ſignify the ſame perſons or things with thoſe in the original; if the verbs ſignify the ſame ſtate of being, doing or ſuffering; if the ſame relations, connexions or qualifications of the nouns and verbs be ſignified by the prepoſitions, the adverbs and the conjunctions; then, ſo far as this identity has place, the words are preciſely the ſame in the tranſlation that they are in the original: For the modification of ſound peculiar to a particular language (as *domus* or *contra*) is in this caſe intitled to no conſideration, but that of a ſign ſignifying a certain thing or relation, which may be no leſs exactly ſignified by another modification of ſound (as *a houſe* or *againſt*.)

When we ſpeak of the order of words being the ſame in a tranſlation as in the original, we mean the order of them according to the general conſtruction of language; and not according to the collocation or placing of words, which, in particular languages, may have become cuſtomary for the ſake of the more agreeable pronunciation. Thus, when one ſays in Engliſh, *The good hate to ſin from the love of virtue;* and in Latin *Oderunt peccare boni virtutis amore;* it is obvious to

to common sense, that the order of words, according to the general construction of language, is the same; as we might demonstrate by the rules of universal grammar.

As to the Hebrew and Greek idioms or peculiar phrases, each of them may be considered as a complex term, and generally a phrase may be found in English, as exactly answerable to it in signification, as one single word is to another. Such idiomatic expressions as cannot be verbally rendered, are so rarely to be met with in scripture, that it will be hard to find any tolerable translations of a Latin or Greek book so literal, as our English translation of the scripture; and competent judges allow, (what indeed, in some measure, appears from the valuable readings in the margin) that it might have been more so with advantage. Mr. Thomas Boston, who was a great adept in Hebrew literature, agrees with Mr. Addison, that the Hebrew idioms run into the English tongue with a particular grace and beauty; that they give a force and energy to our expression, warm and animate our language, and convey our thoughts in more ardent and intense phrases, than any that are to be met with in our own tongue.*

The account which critics give of the beauties in the style and composition of the scriptures, (which undoubtedly belong to the form of them) is applicable to a literal translation of them, as well as to the original. This may be exemplified by a passage of an excellent preface to Marlorate's Ecclesiastical Exposition of the Psalms, by Henry Stephens. "The expression," says he, "which we have in Deut. "xxviii. *The heaven which is over thy head shall be brass,* "*and the earth that is under thee shall be iron,* is an instance, "among many, of a style or manner of speaking, *formulæ* "*sermonis,* peculiar to the Hebrews and altogether their "own. Go now, turn over all the Greek and Latin poets, "the heroic, the tragic, the Lyric; will you ever find any "thing in them like this? any words so significant, so em"phatical, so full of majesty? But why should we wonder "that far other words proceed from sacred lips, than from "those of profane authors." Rollin's observations, in his

* Appendix to Memoirs of Mr. Boston, pag. 15.

Belles Lettres, on the ſong of Moſes at the Red Sea, is an example of this ſort of criticiſm on the language of ſcripture.

OBJECTION. The inſpired writers of the New Teſtament frequently tranſlate portions of the Hebrew ſcripture into the Greek language, but in doing ſo, they neither obſerve the *order* of the original always, nor give a literal tranſlation. To be convinced of this compare the following paſſages: Matth. ii. 18. with Jer. xxxi. 15. Luke iii. 4, 5, 6. with Iſa. xl. 3, 4, 5. Luke iv. 18, 19. with Iſa. lxi. 1, 2. Matth. iv. 15, 16. with Iſa. ix. 1, 2. Matth. xii. 18, 19, 20, 21. with Iſa. xlii. 1, 2, 3, 4. Mark vii. 6, 7. with Iſa. xxix. 13. Acts ii. 25, 26, 27, 28. with Pſal. xvi. 8, 9, 10, 11. Acts iii. 22, 23. with Deut. xviii. 15, 18, 19. Acts vii. 42, 43. with Deut. xvii. 15, 18, 19.

ANSWER. If the variations in theſe paſſages are brought to prove that a tranſlation of the Old Teſtament ought not to repreſent the words and phraſeology of the Old Teſtament, then the objector's reaſoning muſt be to this effect: The writers of the New Teſtament in quoting a paſſage occaſionally, and for a particular purpoſe, out of the Old Teſtament, omit ſome words of the original that were not neceſſary to that purpoſe; therefore, ſuch as are not quoting, but tranſlating, and who, in doing ſo, ought to have no other purpoſe than that of rendering *all* the words of the Old Teſtament, may omit ſome of theſe words in their tranſlation. It is manifeſt there is no conſequence here. In quoting a paſſage from any author, we uſe as many or as few of his words as our purpoſe requires: Nor is any injury hereby done to the author, provided only that due care be taken to uſe the words in a manner not diſagreeable to his intention. The deſign of a quotation is to connect ſome part of an author's words and ſenſe with the ſentiments and diſcourſe of him that makes it. The deſign of a tranſlation is ſingly to repreſent the whole of the words and ſenſe of the work or paſſage which is the ſubject of it.

We allow, that the paraphraſes or explications which the Holy Spirit in the ſcripture hath given us of his own words, are of equal authority with the words of which they are explications. But this is God's prerogative. A tranſlator may no more put his own gloſſes and explications in place of the word

word of God, than he may lay claim to unerring wiſdom and divine authority. Many of theſe variations are ſuch as ſerve to explain or amplify the original words of the Old Teſtament. Thus in Iſai. lxi. 1. *To bind up the broken-hearted,* is rendered in Luke iv. 18. *to heal the broken-hearted.* And the laſt clauſe of that verſe in Iſaiah, *The opening of the priſon to them that are bound,* is explained and amplified in the words of Luke, *The recovery of ſight to the blind, to ſet at liberty them that are bound.* So what is in Iſaiah xxix. 13. *Their fear towards me is taught by the precept of men,* is explained in Matth. xv. 9. *In vain do they worſhip me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.* The expreſſions in Iſaiah xlii. 1, 2. *My ſervant whom I uphold: He ſhall not cry—and he ſhall bring forth judgment unto truth,* are in Mat. xii. 18, 19, 20. *My ſervant whom I have choſen, he ſhall not ſtrive nor cry, until he ſend forth judgment unto victory.* What is in Pſal. lxviii. 18. *Thou haſt received gifts for men,* is in Epheſ. iv. 8. *Gave gifts unto men.* So inſtead of *beyond Damaſcus* in Amos v. 27. Stephen in Acts vii. 43. has by way of explanation, *beyond Babylon.* It is to be obſerved, with reſpect to theſe explanatory variations in general, that they are not ſo much a departure from the original words, as an expreſſion of what is included in the emphaſis of them, as has been ſhewn by many learned writers.

Again, when the ſacred writers of the New Teſtament quote a paſſage of the Old, they do not always give us an entire ſentence; but only ſome words of one, which, in their genuine ſenſe, are applicable to the matter in hand. Of this what is cited in Matth. iv. 15, 16. from Iſai. ix. 1, 2. is an example. *The land of Zabulon and the land of Naphtali---by the way of the ſea beyond Jordan, in Galilee of nations. The people, &c.* The evangeliſt omits the words in the beginning of the 1ſt verſe, and the words between *Naphtali* and *by the way.* Thus in Mat. xxi. 5. the words of Zech. ix. 9. *Juſt and having ſalvation,* are left out.

Sometimes a ſentence is made up of two or more quotations from the Old Teſtament. Thus in Matth. xxi. 5. *Say ye to the daughter of Zion,* is taken from Iſai. lxii. 11. and the latter part from Zech. ix. 9. So in Rom. ix. 33. *Behold I lay in Zion a ſtone of ſtumbling and rock of offence, and whoſoever believeth ſhall not be aſhamed,* the firſt and laſt part are taken

taken from Isai. xxviii. 16. and the middle part from Isai. viii. 14.

Sometimes we find the same text cited in several places of the New Testament, and in each of these places some part of it is more particularly applied, according to the text in Isaiah vi. 9, 10. In Acts xxviii. it is adduced to convince the Jews of their obduracy in rejecting the word of the gospel; and therefore the words of Isaiah are used only so far as they described their character: *Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive; for the heart of this people is waxed gross, &c.* But, in the xiith chapter of John, the scope of the evangelist is to represent the spiritual judgment the Jews were under from God, as what accounted for their unbelief; and therefore the words of Isaiah are used so far as they represent the holy and righteous hand which God had in the matter: *He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart,* &c.

Thus, the words of the Old Testament are truly recited in the quotations from it in the New; but such only, and so many of the words, in any particular quotation, as were necessary to the scope or design of the place where it is made. These are rather examples of quoting, applying and comparing passages, than of simply translating.

Upon the whole, it is evident, that, so far as a translation of any part of scripture retains the words of the original, not as to sound, but as to signification, and particularly the metaphors and similies, the form of discourse, the arrangement and division of the matter, it has so far that divinely inspired form of scripture, which, as being immediately from God, is entitled to peculiar reverence. Hence it has been allowed by christians in general to be grossly profane to use the words or peculiar phrases of scripture in a ludicrous manner. Hence, too, our ancestors testified against the stated reading, in the English churches, of passages of the apocryphal books; because, however many useful truths might be found in these books, yet it was accounted a grievous corruption to give human compositions the same place in public worship with the scriptures. "Tho' it should be granted," says the author of Altare Damascenum,

maſcenum, "that the paſſages of the Apocrypha, read in the "ſervice of the church of England, contain nothing impertinent or abſurd; yet they are not trumpets, which God hath "ſanctified, for his prieſts to blow with. The church, in her "purer times, read no other writings in public worſhip, than "thoſe of the prophets and apoſtles. In the church of England the apocryphal writings are read, ſung, and explained "as canonical ſcripture."*

OBJECTION. The inſpired pſalms are not in verſe. Is not the original form of them changed by the verſification?

ANSWER. We formerly obſerved, that the particular verſification uſed for the conveniency of ſinging, is a circumſtance which is by no means incompatible with a due care to retain the words of the Holy Ghoſt. As the pſalms in the original are truly poetical, the buſineſs of the veſifier is little more than putting the words in parcels. Thus the original form is adhered to almoſt equally in the following three tranſlations of the third verſe of the firſt pſalm.

And he ſhall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his ſeaſon; his leaf ſhall not wither, and whatſoever he doth ſhall proſper.

He ſhall be like a tree that grows,
Near planted by a river,
Which in his ſeaſon yields his fruit;
And his leaf fadeth never,
And all he doth ſhall proſper well.

That man ſhall be like to a tree,
That planted by the running river grows,
Which fruit doth bear in time of year,
Whoſe leaves ſhall never fade nor root unlooſe;
His actions all
Still proſper ſhall. DRUMMOND.†

SECT.

* Altare Damaſcenum. Cap. 10.

† It deſerves our notice, that ſeveral reaſons offered for the opinion, that other compoſitions are more proper to be uſed in our public praiſes than the book of pſalms, are ſuch as would militate againſt the ſinging of theſe pſalms in the original Hebrew, ſuppoſing we were to ſing in that language, fully as much as they do againſt ſinging them in a tranſlation; for they are not more founded upon or connected with the peculiarity of the Jews; nor are

SECT. III. *Whether we are always to consider the Words which we sing in Solemn Worship as our own, and as applicable to our present situation?*

IN the Discourse on the duty of singing psalms, it was observed, that it is not always necessary to consider the words we sing in solemn worship as our own, or as applicable to our present situation. This assertion has been represented, with peculiar virulence, not only as erroneous, but "as an "excuse for the crime of falsifying before God, and an at-"tempt to change our obligations to truth and sincerity." The direct contrary of what is asserted in the Discourse must then be the opinion of our opponents, namely, That the nature of the exercise of singing in solemn worship is such as requires the words we sing to be considered as our own, and that it is unwarrantable to sing words that are not applicable to our present condition.

This opinion is justly rejected, because, in the first place, it confounds the exercise of singing in solemn worship with that of prayer. The scripture plainly represents these as two distinct exercises; 1 Corinth. xiv. 15. *I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.* James v. 13. *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.* Several differences between them were pointed out in the Discourse on singing psalms.* At present, we only observe, that the words we utter

are they more obscured by allusions to these peculiarities in a translation, than they are in the original. They who offer such reasons, are, therefore, justly charged with preferring mere human compositions to what themselves allow to be the words of the Holy Spirit.

* Mr. Calderwood, speaking of the practice in some cathedrals of singing prayers, observes, That so far as forms of prayer are sung, they are not prayers; for, says he, *canere proprie non est orare*, to sing is not properly to pray. *Altare Damascenum*, cap. x; where he also quotes a passage of the learned Casaubon's Exercitations, which blames Borenius, the popish annalist, for confounding these two exercises. The author of an Examination, &c. p. 39. insists, that prayer and singing are the same; "because" says he,

ter in prayer, are ſtill conſidered as our own, and as applicable to our preſent ſituation; but it is not neceſſary to conſider the words we ſing as ſuch.* In prayer the thoughts and affections ſuggeſt the words; but in ſinging, it is juſt the reverſe; for the words we ſing, rightly underſtood, ſuggeſt matter of believing meditation; and thus kindle ſpiritual and devout affections.

We obſerve, in the ſecond place, that the ſuppoſition of our opponents, with regard to the import of ſinging, has no foundation in the common language of mankind. For if it had, a perſon's ſinging verſes not applicable to himſelf would expoſe him to the reproach of lying. But this was never known to be the caſe. Who would blame one, that had never heard a nightingale, for ſinging the following beautiful lines of Milton's *Il penſeroſo*?—

Sweet

he, "it is allowed that we inwardly pray what we ſing." This puts one in mind of the plea of the popiſh doctors for the worſhip of images, which was, that, while they *outwardly* kneeled before the image, their *inward* devotion was directed to God; as if ſuch external worſhip was to be denominated from that inward devotion.

* To this an objection has been offered, to the following purpoſe: We uſe other words than our own in preaching and prayer, as well as in ſinging. In preaching, the words of others may be quoted: In prayer there is a repetition of promiſes upon which we plead; therefore the words which we utter in preaching and prayer, may as well be conſidered as the words of others, as thoſe we utter in ſinging; and that, in all theſe exerciſes, there is the ſame reaſon to conſider the words we utter as our own.

Anſwer. It is a common obſervation, that exceptions eſtabliſh general rules. So the quoting of the words of others in preaching, and the mentioning of the promiſes of God in prayer, ſtrongly imply, that the words of theſe exerciſes, are, in general, conſidered as our own. Beſides, the queſtion is not about what is actually done in preaching or prayer, but whether it be as agreeable to the nature and deſign of theſe exerciſes to repeat ſermons and prayers compoſed by others, as it is to the nature and deſign of ſinging, to make uſe of a pſalm or hymn compoſed by another. Let the queſtion be determined by the approved examples of theſe exerciſes recorded in ſcripture: There we have examples of ſinging in the words of David and Aſaph; but none of praying or preaching by repeating the prayers or ſermons of others.

Sweet bird that ſhunn'ſt the noiſe of folly,
Moſt muſical, moſt melancholy!
The chauntreſs of the woods among,
I woo to hear thy even ſong.

We obſerve in the third place, that this ſuppoſition is contrary to the approved practice of the church of God. The xviiith pſalm, which is expreſly directed to the chief muſician, was undoubtedly ſung by the Levites. But it is plain, that, as David ſpeaks throughout that pſalm in the firſt perſon, and of his own perſonal caſes and experiences, ſo the Levites could by no means ſing it as their words, or as expreſſive of their experiences. It cannot be denied, that the book of pſalms, from the time of its being delivered to the Jews, continued to be ſung in their ordinary ſolemn worſhip. Hence they would be frequently ſinging pſalms concerning a proſperous condition, while they were in affliction; and, on the contrary, pſalms concerning an afflicted condition, while they were in proſperity. Indeed, we know no ſyſtem of pſalms or hymns uſed by any church, which, upon the ſuppoſition in queſtion, could be ſung by church members in general, conſiſtently with ſincerity. Let us conſider, for example, how every perſon in an ordinary worſhipping aſſembly is to ſing the following words of Dr. Watts' as his own words:

By long experience have I known;
Thy ſovereign power to ſave:
At thy command I venture down,
Securely to the grave.

Hence one is led to think, that the charge of inſincerity, brought againſt us by our opponents, may be juſtly retorted. For how does it conſiſt with ſincerity to conſider the words which we ſing as our own words, whilſt we are conſcious to ourſelves that they are not ſo at all? Upon this principle, it ſeems inconceivable how a perſon, ordinarily joining with any congregation or family in this part of ſocial worſhip, can eſcape the charge of hypocriſy and diſſimulation: For he muſt be ſenſible, that the frames and exerciſes repreſented in the words ſung, are often very different from his own.

Perhaps the objector means to excuſe this inconſiſtency, when he intimates, that, whilſt the facts repreſented in a pſalm exiſt any where, a perſon may ſing the words of the pſalm

pſalm as his own.* But the facts repreſented in a pſalm, are either repreſented ſimply as exiſting at preſent, or as exiſting in the pſalmiſt's experience. It it be unwarrantable or inconſiſtent with truth to ſing pſalms in which facts are repreſented *ſimply as exiſting at preſent, after theſe facts have ceaſed to exiſt any where*, then it was unwarrantable to ſing various paſſages of the pſalms in ſeveral periods of the Old Teſtament diſpenſation. Thus, in the time of the Babyloniſh captivity, they could not warrantably ſing, upon this ſuppoſition, the words of the cxxiid pſalm, *Jeruſalem is builded as a city: Whither the tribes go up—to give thanks unto the name of the Lord. For there are ſet thrones of judgment; the thrones of the houſe of David.* Nor, after the Babyloniſh captivity, when they had no king, the words of the xxiſt, *The king truſteth in the Lord.* Nor the words of the cxxxiid, *Ariſe, O Lord, unto thy reſt, thou, and the ark of thy ſtrength;* the ark being one of the glories of the firſt temple, which were wanting in the ſecond. Thus there were often, even under the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, ſome paſſages of the pſalms, which, upon the objector's principle, could not be ſung conſiſtently with truth. But where have we a ſingle hint in ſcripture, that there was any paſſage of the pſalms which it would be unwarrantable to ſing in any period after they were given to the church? Iſrael was frequently exhorted to ſing pſalms; it is no where ſaid, excepting thoſe pſalms *which ſimply repreſent facts as exiſting, which have now ceaſed to exiſt:* Nor is there any thing ſaid about the pſalms, or about the exerciſe of ſinging, that implies ſuch an exception. With reſpect to paſſages of the pſalms, in which facts are repreſented *as exiſting in the pſalmiſt's experience*, ſuch as theſe, *My heart is fixed: I have more underſtanding than all my teachers*, theſe, according to the hypotheſis of the objector, can, no more than thoſe of the former claſs, be ſung warrantably or conſiſtently with truth, by any who have not, in the time of ſinging, the very ſame attainment or experience: For, if a perſon ſing ſuch a paſſage as his own words, the alleging that, though he is a ſtranger to ſuch attainments and experiences, they do, in fact, exiſt ſomewhere, will not ſave him from the charge of falſehood, in aſcribing them to himſelf. Thus, according to

* An Examination, &c. page 54, 55.

to the objector's absurd principle, no passage in which the psalmist represents his case as different from what we find our own to be, however full of suitable instruction and admonition, can be warrantably sung by us in solemn worship.

The supposition of its being essential to singing in solemn worship, that we should consider the words we sing as our own, and as descriptive of our present case, though grosly absurd, is the principal reason why our opponents refuse to sing such expressions in the book of psalms as the following: *Blow up the trumpet in the new moon: in the time appointed in our solemn feast day. Blessed is the man in whose heart are the ways of them who, passing through the valley of Baca, make it a well: the rain also filleth the pools. Bind the sacrifices with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.* Why are such passages deemed improper to be sung in New Testament worship? Not, it seems, because they are obscure, or afford little instruction; but because church members cannot now sing them as their own words, or as, in their literal sense, relative to their present situation. One should think, however, that no more would be necessary to convince a reasonable person of the absurdity of such an opinion, than to consider, that, while there is a great variety of frames and exercises among church members, there can be no singing, according to this opinion, consistently with truth and sincerity, unless every one have a psalm or hymn of his own; and joint singing be utterly abolished.

Such is the absurd hypothesis of our opponents with regard to some passages of the psalms representing facts as presently existing which we must regard as past events. They cannot understand how they can be warrantably sung. Yet prejudice being removed, few things are more easily understood. Remembering that the words we sing are not ours, but the words of the psalmist, or of the church in his time, (which appears very natural and easy) we may justly consider the scenes of mercy or judgment through which the Lord brought his people in former ages, as set before us in the present tense, that we may contemplate them in a more lively affecting manner: Thus we may, in some measure, attain the end for which they were written, which was, that *we through faith and patience of the scriptures might have hope.* Such passages, considered in this light, and set home

on

on our hearts by the Holy Spirit, will prove real food to our faith, and encouragement to our hope. This matter is repreſented with great propriety in the XIIIth Direction of Mr. Marſhal's Goſpel Myſtery of Sanctification. "We are," ſays he, "to ſing ſuch pſalms as ſpeak in the firſt perſon, "though we cannot apply them to ourſelves as words ut"tered by ourſelves, concerning ourſelves; and in this we "do not lie. David ſpeaks of Chriſt as of himſelf, as a "pattern of affliction and virtue, to inſtruct others; and we "ſing ſuch pſalms, not as our own words, but words for our "inſtruction. And therein we do not lie any more than "the Levites, the ſons of Korah, or Jeduthun, or other "muſicians bound to ſing them. Though it be good to "perſonate all the good we can; yet we have ſo much "liberty in the uſe of pſalms, that, though we cannot ap"ply all to ourſelves as ſpeaking and thinking the ſame; "yet we ſhall anſwer the end if we ſing for our inſtruction." And ſays another eminent divine, "May we not bleſs and "extol that God in praiſes, who hath redeemed others from "thoſe ſins under which we yet groan? and may not the "ſinging of this contribute to the ſtrengthening of our faith "and hope of the like redemption? and may not we in the "ſinging of ſuch experiences of others, be raiſed up to ſee "what an high and rich favour it is to be bleſſed with ſuch "redemption? and cannot all this be done without hypo"criſy?" *

SECT.

* Brown's View of the Quaker's Religion. The author of an Examination, &c. pag. 16. ſays, "Indeed, had the Sovereign "Lord of all made it known by any means, that it is his pleaſure "we ſhould continue to ſing SUCH MATTER, our reaſon ſhould "bow and acquieſce." He means ſuch matter as refers to and deſcribes a caſe quite different from the preſent caſe of the church, and the particular perſons who ſing. Now, it is plainly the revealed word of God, that Jeduthun and the other Levites ſhould ſing pſalms referring to and deſcribing various perſonal caſes, which David was in, quite defferent from what we can ſuppoſe all or any one of them to have been in; that the Old Teſtament church ſhould ſing the pſalms without exception, when they were in captivity, and deprived of the temple worſhip, as well as when they had it; and that a whole family or congregation ſhould join together in ſinging a pſalm referring to, and deſcribing one particular

SECT. IV. *Whether the Examples of David, Asaph and others, in making Psalms for the Use of the Church in Solemn Worship, is to be imitated by us.*

OBJECTION. "What shall we say of the more abundant supply of the Spirit of Christ, which we have received, if, with all its fulness, we are in a worse condition with respect to one important part of our worship than the Old Testament church? The children of Israel, from the days of Moses until their restoration from the Babylonish captivity, had persons among them enabled by the Spirit to compose psalms and hymns suitable to their situation and circumstances. And now when a more abundant supply of the Spirit of Christ is acknowledged to be given, christians are wholly incapacitated for composing psalms and hymns to be sung in solemn worship."

ANSWER. This objection proceeds upon the supposition that the exercise of praise is better managed, when we use songs newly composed for the occasion than when we use old ones. But this is not always or necessarily true; because old ones may be as well adapted to the occasion, and in other respects better than new ones. We have no reason to doubt but that the words of David and Asaph were used with as much propriety in the time of Hezekiah, as when they were first composed. Besides, the objection supposes (what is very absurd) that it is impossible for a form of psalmody, though given by the only wise God, to be suitable to both the Old and New Testament dispensation, or even to more than one occasion; for here it is peremptorily asserted, that the church must be in a worse condition, for want of persons enabled by the Spirit to compose psalms or hymns occasionally. Is not this too like a limiting of God as to his manner

ticular case, though the congregation or family consist of persons whose cases are as various as their features. All this is proved sufficiently from the appointment of singing the psalms in general; from the recorded example of the Jewish church; and from the nature of singing in social worship. Thus, it is proved, that the Sovereign Lord of all hath made known, that it is his pleasure, that we should sing such matter; and therefore, as the Examiner has well said, "our reason should bow and acquiesce."

manner of ordering the condition of the church? One perſon might ſay, with as much reaſon, that the church is now neceſſarily in a worſe condition, ſince it had no infallible teachers or writers, like the prophets and apoſtles; whoſe new occaſional directions about the right underſtanding and application of word and providence, might be ſuppoſed to be as neceſſary as new poetical compoſitions. Another might ſuggeſt, that the church muſt now be in a worſe condition, ſince miracles have ceaſed. There is no end of ſuch ſuggeſtions. But we may aſſure ourſelves, that the condition of the church with reſpect to her public praiſes is better or worſe, not according to the newneſs or oldneſs of the compoſitions ſhe makes uſe of, but according as her exerciſe is more or leſs ſuitable to the true meaning and ſpirit of the ſcripture-forms of pſalmody.

Objection. "If the children and people of God have "ſung his praiſes upon every new deliverance; if the pro- "phets break out into unuſual tranſports whenever a ray "of goſpel light dawns upon them; if they foretel and en- "join that the livelieſt gratitude ſhould be manifeſted, and "that ſongs of praiſe and gratitude ſhould be compoſed and "ſung by thoſe that ſhould ſhare its bleſſings,——what "ſhall we ſay? Is it poſſible to reſiſt the force of ſuch ex- "amples, or to gainſay and oppoſe exhortations ſo reaſon- "able and juſt?"*

Answer. A great deal of declamation on this head might have been ſpared, being obviouſly quite foreign to the matter in hand. The duty of ſinging the praiſes of God for each of his mercies, and eſpecially for the bleſſings of the goſpel, is not diſputed; but the queſtion is, Whether the church, in order to the right performance of this duty, muſt have hymns or pſalms newly compoſed, and different both in matter and form, from the ſcripture-pſalms? Shall we ſuppoſe, that the praiſes of a perſon or people are unacceptable to God, however ſuitable to the ground and occaſion of them, merely becauſe they were promoted and expreſſed by a ſcripture-ſong; and that the ſcripture-ſong had ſuch a diſmal effect, not becauſe it was unſuitable, but only becauſe it was not newly compoſed?

* A Diſcourſe on Pſalmody, by Mr. Lata.

We do not question the binding force of scripture-examples. But one must distinguish between examples that are imitable, and those that are not so. We are not to imitate the Israelites in the practice of what is abrogated by the New Testament dispensation. We are not to imitate examples of an extraordinary and miraculous nature; or examples of something altogether dependent upon local and singular circumstances. We allow, that we are to imitate the prophets in the moral duty of praising and giving thanks to God for his mercies. Nor is it unwarrantable to compose a hymn on occasion of some remarkable deliverance wrought for us. But to dictate a form of psalmody to be used in solemn worship, and to be substituted in the place of the scripture-songs, is a different matter. In doing this, a person, without inspiration, has neither precept nor example in the word to warrant him. For the only songs which we have any such precept or example for using in the ordinary solemn worship of the church, were given, like the rest of the scriptures, by divine inspiration.

OBJECTION. If we may not imitate the examples of the prophets in composing hymns to be used in solemn worship, because they were inspired; then we may not imitate the examples of praying and preaching recorded in scripture: For "we have no scripture-examples of any persons "praying or preaching, but such as were inspired."*

ANSWER. The reason why we say, that we may not imitate the example of giving psalms to be sung in public worship, is not that those who gave them were inspired; but that they gave them by virtue of inspiration; for *all scripture was given by inspiration*. Some things recorded of the prophets and apostles, were done by them as men, in the exercise of their natural faculties; as Paul's appealing to Cæsar: Some things were done by them as partakers of the renewing grace of God, common to all believers; as their believing and praying: Some things were done in the exercise of that official authority which they had in common with the ordinary pastors of the church; as their preaching: And some things were done by them as inspired, or by virtue merely of that extraordinary inspiration by which they penned

* A Discourse on Psalmody, pag. 97.

penned the scriptures or performed miracles. Inspired persons cannot be imitated in things of the last sort: But they may in things of the other three sorts.

Besides, it a manifest falsehood that we have no examples of any persons praying or preaching but such as were inspired. There are examples recorded of persons, whom we have no ground to consider as inspired, praying; as the people of Israel, 1 Kings viii. 36. Psalm lxxx. 4. the woman of Canaan, Mat. xv. 22, 25. the thief on the cross, Luke xxii. 42. the publican, Luke xviii. 13. the christians at Rome, Rom. xv. 30. all saints, Rev. viii. 3.; and also preaching, as Epaphras, Col. i. 7. Archippus, Col. iv. 17. those that were over the Thessalonians in the Lord, 1 Thess. v. 12. the angel having the everlasting gospel in his hand, representing some preachers of the word, Rev. xiv. 6.

CHAP. III.

Shewing that the Obligation to use the Scripture-songs is common to the Old and New Testament Dispensation.

IN the Discourse on the Divine Ordinance of Singing Psalms, the following observation was proposed and considered, namely, *That the inspired forms of psalmody were given to the church to be sung in her public worship, till the end of time.* The strange opinions that have been vented in opposition to this observation, render the discussion of the following subjects necessary.

SECT. I. *Of the Argument for the Use of the Psalms in the Solemn Praises of the Church under the New Testament, arising from Scripture-example.*

IT was observed in the Discourse, that the delivery of the psalms to the chief musician plainly intimated that they were to be sung in public worship. Accordingly, it is said in 2 Chron. xxix. 30. *Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praises unto the Lord in the words*

of

of David and of Asaph the seer: And they sung praises with gladness. Here we may observe, that though the Levites were appointed to officiate in what belonged to ceremonial worship, as in instrumental music; yet it will not follow, that their singing the praises of the Lord in the words of of David and Asaph belonged to that worship; since it was ordinary and suitable to the nature of that dispensation, for moral and ceremonial duties to be joined together, both in the injunction and in the practice of them. See an example in the 22d verse of the next chapter: *And Hezekiah spake comfortably to all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the Lord, and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace-offerings, and making confession to the Lord God of their fathers.* Now, that teaching the good knowledge of the Lord, and making confession to him are moral duties, in the practice of which the Levites ought to be imitated by us, is what nobody doubts; though they are here connected with the ceremonial observances of keeping the feast and offering peace-offerings, in the practice of which the example of the Levites is now no more to be imitated.* Besides, the singing of psalms was the duty and exercise, not only of the Levites, but of the whole congregation of Israel. The praises of the people are described in the same terms as those of the Levites, Psal. cxviii. 2, 3, 4. *Let Israel now say, that his mercy endureth for ever. Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy endureth for ever. Let them that fear the Lord say, that his mercy endureth for ever.* Hence the whole church is called upon to join in the exercise of singing psalms, Psal. xcv. 1, 2. *O come let us sing unto the Lord, let us make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.*

CV. 2.

* The author of an Examination, &c. may here see that, in order to shew that the consideration of the psalms being directed to the chief musician, operates against the duty of using them in public worship to the end of the world, he should have adduced some other reason than that which he has assigned, p. 13. namely, that the singing of them in the temple was to be accompanied with the circumstance of instrumental music. It is plain, that this is nothing to his purpose, unless the universal proposition were true, That every thing, which was attended with a ceremonial rite, was ceremonial. The falsehood of this proposition is here sufficiently shewn.

cv. 2. *Sing unto him; sing psalms unto him.* There is no reason to think that the people are exhorted in these, and the like texts, to sing any other songs than those which were sung by the Levites.* The writers on Jewish antiquities agree, that it was the custom of every family at the passover to sing the Hallel, or hymn from the 113th psalm to the 118th inclusive.

Objection. "This only proves what nobody denies, "that the Jewish church actually sung the Old Testament "songs. But this does not prove that there was a divine "appointment in the case; this example extends no far- "ther than the Jewish church; and therefore proves "nothing as to what the christian church should sing."†

Answer. It is undeniable, that there are cases in which a divine institution may be inferred from an approved example recorded in scripture. Thus, orthodox divines conclude the divine institutions of sacrifices soon after the fall, from the acceptable offering of them by Abel; that of the christian sabbath, from the examples recorded in the New Testament of the public assemblies for hearing the word and communicating on that day; that of the form of swearing by lifting up the hand, from the examples of it recorded in scripture. When we find such things practised with God's approbation, we justly conclude, that they must have been things of his appointment; no other being acceptable to him in religious worship. In like manner, the divine appointment of the singing of the book of psalms in solemn worship, may be argued from the divinely approved example of the church of God recorded in scripture.

We allow, as has been already observed, that there are examples of the people of God recorded in scripture, which we are not bound to imitate: Such as, examples of their observing the ceremonial and judicial laws; examples of an extraordinary and miraculous nature, as that of prophesying or dividing the waters of a river; examples of something

* When the people of God were exhorted to sing his praise, they were bid not to make, but take a psalm ready made to their hands, Psal. lxxxi. 1, 2. Dr. Gill.

† An Examination, &c. page 23.

thing altogether dependent on local and singular circumstances, as that of going upon the house-top to pray. But the examples of singing praise with the words of David and of Asaph, is different from all these. It is neither an observance of any ceremonial or judicial law; nor is it of a miraculous, extraordinary or local nature; but an example of the acceptable manner of performing what cannot be denied to be a moral duty, an ordinary exercise of God's worship, performed, not by virtue of any extraordinary POWER or gift, but by means of such ability as God ordinarily affords church members in his service. Nothing can be more false than that the obligation to imitate an example of this kind extends no farther than the Jewish church.

OBJECTION. That the psalms were given to the Jewish church for this purpose is perhaps probable: But is it hereby proved, that they were given to any other church?

ANSWER. This way of speaking is very absurd. For several ages, and particularly from the time that the psalms were given, to the coming of Christ, the Jewish church comprehended the whole church of God upon earth: Those that were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, were then strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. This church is no more confined within such narrow bounds: It is now greatly enlarged by the calling of the Gentiles; but it is still the same church. Hence when the psalms were given to the Jewish church, they were given to the same church which now is: For we are not to consider the church of the Old Testament, which consisted of the Israelites, and the church of the New Testament, though it consists for the most part of Gentiles, as two different communities; but as one kingdom of Christ, who hath made both one, Eph. ii. 14. and who hath inserted us, who were wild olives, into the fat olive-tree, Rom. xi. 17. And therefore the laws, which have once been given by Christ the King and Head of the church, are always binding upon the whole church, unless he declare that he hath abrogated them by another institution.*

OBJECTION. "I desire the reader to examine the whole "chapter, 2 Chron. xxix. and all the history of Hezekiah, "and

* Witsii Oeconom. Fœder. lib. iv. cap. iv. § 33.

" and he will find, that neither Hezekiah nor the princes " were prophets; that they do not pretend to be actuated " by inspiration in the whole business,—— but they acted as " any other good men would do in similar circumstances. " Having a variety of psalms suited to the worship of God " in general, under that dispensation, they judged certain " compositions of David to be particularly suited to the " present occasion, and ordered them to be sung according- " ly. As well might a minister, having pointed out a par- " ticular psalm to be sung by a worshipping assembly, plead " that, because he did so, God had appointed that psalm " to be sung by the whole church to the end of the world, " as reason in that manner from the command of Hezekiah " and the princes to the Levites."

Answer. It is absurd to suppose that Hezekiah commanded any thing in the worship of God, but what God himself had commanded. Hezekiah's character (being *a king who did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done*) will not allow us to suppose, that he either practised or recommended any thing in the worship of God, merely because it appeared to him to be suitable, or while he had not the warrant of a divine command for it. The whole of the reformation described in this chapter, is declared to have been directed by a divine command: Ver. 15. *The Levites came, according to the commandment of the king by the word of the Lord, to cleanse the house of the Lord.* Ver. 25. *He set the Levites in the house of the Lord, with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: for so was the commandment of the Lord by his prophets.* Thus, we have good reason to conclude that Hezekiah directed the Levites to sing the words of David and of Asaph, not because they seemed to him to be suitable, but because such was *the commandment of the Lord by his prophets.*

The case supposed by the objector is quite different from that of the text under consideration. What the minister did is supposed to be done without any divine command, merely because it appeared to him to be suitable. But what Hezekiah did, in reforming this, as well as other parts

parts of the order of the temple, was according to the commandment of the Lord by his prophets.

No minister, nor magistrate, has authority to make any thing a rule to the church, or the members thereof, *because he does it.* But the authority of the Most High God makes any example of his church, or of any of his people, a rule to all succeeding generations, by recording it, with approbation, in his own word. Other examples may be useful; but those only that are recorded in scripture are a rule to us. Again, the minister, on the objector's supposition, fixes on a particular psalm; whereas Hezekiah and the princes pointed out, not only, as the objector intimates, certain compositions, but a system of songs, under the denomination of the words of David and Asaph, as what the Levites were divinely appointed to sing.

OBJECTION. "If there was in this example recorded in "2 Chron. xxix. 30. a divine appointment, directing the "church in her psalmody, this absurd consequence would "follow, that neither the Jews themselves, nor the christian church, should ever sing any psalms, but those which "were composed by David and Asaph."*

ANSWER. This is no better a consequence, than it would be to infer from Peter's exhortation to take heed to *the sure word of prophecy*, that he did not mean that we should take heed to the law of Moses, or the psalms, or the books of the New Testament. Even the whole collection of the inspired psalms may, by an usual figure, be called the words of David and Asaph, because these prophets were the penmen of the greatest part of them. Besides, supposing many of the psalms were not then written, yet this example is obligatory with respect to these also; as David's example in meditating on and esteeming the word, is obligatory with respect to such parts of it as were not given to the church till after his time.

OBJECTION. "Though this may prove that, on that "particular occasion, a song of David and Asaph was sung, "as being suitable to the occasion, yet it does not prove, "that

* An Examination, &c. pag. 9.

" that the Jews in their songs of praise confined themselves " to the words of these prophets."*

Answer. This example shews what was the practice of the Jewish church, or what form of psalmody they made use of in their ordinary public worship. It is not said, as the objector insinuates, that they were to sing a particular song of David and Asaph, but that they were to sing praise *with their words* indefinitely; intimating that their words, or what came under that general denomination, constituted the form of psalmody which was then made use of. It appears, that uninspired persons were not then permitted to add to the church's form of psalmody: Otherwise, why were the Levites so expressly limited, by a direction agreeably to the divine appointment, to such words as were given for the purpose of singing, by divine inspiration, even though these were not new, but composed upwards of two hundred years before.

Objection. This example is defective in respect of the persons who gave the commandment. However Hezekiah and the princes, as being vested with civil authority, might give this command, they were not prophets, and therefore had no authority, as such, to prescribe laws, binding the Jewish church, much less had they a right to give forth laws obligating the christian church to the end of time.

Answer. We are to distinguish between a command by which any part of religious worship is appointed and authorized, and a command by which the will and appointment of God concerning any part of religious worship is declared, and the attention of others directed thereto.† If the command of Hezekiah and the princes had been of the former sort, the worship performed in compliance with it, would have been mere will-worship; worship taught by the precept of men, which is condemned in Isaiah xxix. 13. Matth.

* A Discourse on Psalmody, pag. 94.

† David, as a prophet, immediately directed by the Spirit and by the hand of the Lord upon him, delivered the form of the temple and the distributions of the priests and Levites to Solomon: and Hezekiah did not institute any thing in religion; he only restored what was delivered before by David. *Altare Damascenum*, cap. 19.

Matth. xv. 9. We judge, therefore, that it was a command of the latter sort; intimating the command and appointment of God, and directing the attention of the Levites thereto. The warrant then which we have in this passage for singing the words of David and Asaph, does not lie in the command of Hezekiah and the princes as in the original appointment of it; but it lies, first, in the appointment of God, as it was supposed and implied in the commandment or direction of Hezekiah and the princes; for there is no other worship of God described in this chapter, than such as it became the piety of these princes to countenance, and the holiness of God to accept; that is, such as himself had appointed: And, secondly, in the singing of the praises of God by the Levites with the words of David and of Asaph, being recorded as an acceptable manner of performing an ordinary part of public worship, and therefore an example proper for our imitation.

SECT. II. *Of the Question, Whether the Singing of the Book of Psalms be abrogated?*

IT has been objected, "that the singing of many parts "of the book of psalms is abrogated." If we ask, What are these parts? the objector answers, *That the scripture-songs were not designed to be a system to the christian church; nor to be any otherwise used in her psalmody, than as the matter of any of them is suited to the christian dispensation.* If it be further asked, How are we to determine what parts are not suited to the christian dispensation? he gives us two answers: One is, "There are parts of the psalms so found-"ed upon and connected with the ceremonial institutions, "that they can have neither being nor meaning beyond the "the institutions themselves; particularly, those which de-"clare that these institutions still exist; and in singing of "which, the worshippers affirm that they will practise "agreeably to them; as in these words, *I will offer bul-"locks with goats.*" The other answer is, "That the late "Synod hath given its approbation to a version of psalms, "which superseded the necessity of an *expurgatory index.*" The objector calls Dr. Watts' imitation a version, by *a catachresis or abuse of names:* Recte dicimus abusionem, (says Quintilian,)

Quintilian,) quæ non habentibus nomen suum accommodat quod in proximo est:* Although Dr. Watts' performance could not be ranked among the *non habentia nomen suum*; since the doctor tells us, that what he intended was not *a version*, but *an imitation*.

Such are the parts of the book of psalms, the singing of which, according to the objector, is abrogated. Let us now hear his reasons for this strange opinion. The first is, "That it is impossible to sing them, because it is impossible to retain the form of the inspired psalms in any language but that in which they were originally dictated: "and impossibilities are not obligatory." This, one should think, might be sufficient: But it is sometimes necessary to dissuade blind mortals from attempting impossibilities; and therefore the objector proceeds—

The second reason is, "The obligation to any practice "continues so long as the reason on which it is founded "continues; and ceases, when that reason ceases to exist. "Nothing can be more evident than that many parts of the "psalms are founded upon, and so connected with the ce- "remonial institutions, that they cannot have being or "meaning beyond the institutions themselves: I mean, "particularly, those which declare that these institutions "still exist; and in singing of which the worshippers af- "firm, that they will practise accordingly."†

The third reason is, "That a practice is abrogated, when "persons, under the influence of divine inspiration, intro- "duce

* This figure is rightly used, when a thing has no proper name, and we give it the name of what stands in the nearest relation to it.

† The manner of expression here used by the author of an Examination, &c. is shocking to such as reverence the scriptures as the word of God, the whole of which is designed for the use of the church to the end of time. According to our author here, what Christ says to Peter and John, Luke xxii. 6. *Go and prepare us the passover that we may eat*, has now neither being nor meaning; because in these words he declares, that the observance of the passover did then still exist; and that he and his disciples were to practise accordingly. Nay, there is no speech nor conversation about things past, which has either being or meaning. Thus, according to him, a great part of history, and even of the bible, has neither being nor meaning.

" duce other modes and forms of worſhip in the room of it. " For Paul informs us, (1 Cor. xiv.) that perſons were, in " the firſt age of chriſtianity, divinely inſpired to dictate " pſalms to chriſtian worſhippers: the ſinging of which " newly dictated pſalms came in place of the ſinging of Da- " vid's pſalms, according to the practice of the Old Teſta- " ment; as the obſervation of the firſt day of the week " came in place of the obſervation of the ſeventh."* And further, the objector, to deter *any man* from opening a mouth againſt him, preſumes that ſuch particular obſervations have been made by him, " as are ſufficient to direct *any man* as " to what he ſhould ſing, provided he has the uſual ſhare of " underſtanding."

ANSWER. It may be obſerved, that among the numerous verſes of the original pſalms omitted in the Imitation of Dr. Watts, there are many ſo far from being founded on the ceremonial inſtitutions, that they do not ſo much as allude to them. For example, the firſt twelve verſes of the xviith pſalm, and the firſt ſix verſes of the lxxxvith. One has but to open the book for inſtances of this kind. So that either the objector's principle muſt be inadequate, that is, there muſt be ſome other reaſon beſides this, for reckoning the ſinging of ſo great a part of the book of pſalms abrogated; or the expurgatory index, which, we are told, the late Synod and the preſent General Aſſembly of the Preſbyterian church of the United States of America has given us, muſt be very erroneous, and calculated to miſlead the inattentive.

But let us proceed to ſome particular conſideration of the objector's reaſons for his opinion, that the ſinging of ſome of the pſalms, or of ſome parts of many of them, is abrogated under the New Teſtament diſpenſation. The firſt is, " That the ſinging of them is impoſſible; becauſe it is ut- " terly impoſſible to retain the form of the inſpired pſalms " in any other language, than that in which they were ori- " ginally dictated."

This appears at firſt view to be a ſtrange paradox, or rather a glaring falſehood, namely, that it is impoſſible to do what the church has actually been doing, for more than a thouſand years paſt. It puts one in mind of the philoſopher who

* An Examination, &c. pag. 15, 16, 17.

who affected to display his acuteness, by proving that there is no such thing as motion, and whom Diogenes sufficiently confuted by walking through the room. It has been shewn, that this impossibility of retaining in a translation the form of the inspired psalms, is but a vain pretence. It is true, that the observation of the ceremonial and judicial laws is now impracticable. But is that which renders them impracticable, any way parallel to what is pretended by the objector to render the singing of the psalms so? Is it as impossible to translate the psalms so as to preserve, in some measure, the same form that they have in the original, as it is now for the Jews, dispersed all over the world, to repair three times a year to Jerusalem, or to ascertain the tribe and family to which every individual belongs? It is well known, that there is hardly a book in any foreign language so capable of being translated word for word; or which, by a literal translation, loses so little of its original form, as the bible. Dr. Blair observes concerning our version of the poetical parts of scripture, that, being strictly word for word after the original, it preserves the form and order of the original sentence.

The objector's second reason proceeds wholly upon the supposition, that we must consider the words we sing in divine worship as our own words, and as applicable to our present case and circumstances; a supposition which, as hath been shewn, is very absurd. An observation may only be made here, with respect to the psalmist's expression quoted by the objector, which will apply to similar expressions. It is necessary to distinguish between David's forming of this resolution, *I will offer bullocks with goats*; and the church's singing it in her solemn worship. It is allowed, that David's end in forming such a resolution, must have included in it the practice of the ceremonial law. But the church's end in singing it, is to be instructed and excited to the exercise of faith by David's example. "Such passages of the "psalms," to use the words of Mr. Hervey, in the VIth Dialogue of his Theron and Aspasio, "suppose the persons "whom they describe, to be convinced of their natural cor- "ruption, to be humbled under a sense of their actual guilt, "and to live in the conscientious observance of the expia- "tory sacrifices; all which had an invariable reference to

" Chriſt, and derived their whole virtue from his mediation. " By ſuch ſentiments and ſuch a conduct, they reduced to " practice the very eſſence of goſpel-doctrine; diſavowing " their own deeds, however virtuous or religious; and " truſting in the STRENGTH of Iſrael, the Lord our " righteouſneſs, who was the ſubſtance of every purifying " and of every propiatory rite." Suppoſing this to be the real import, as it undoubtedly was, of ſuch paſſages, and ſuppoſing the inſtruction and further edification of worſhippers in faith, holineſs and comfort, to be the end of the Holy Spirit in recording, and the end of the church in ſinging them; ſurely the obligation ariſing from this end is as great yet as it ever was; that is, church-members have ſtill as much need to ſing them for their inſtruction and further edification, as ever.

With reſpect to the third reaſon, it proceeds upon the ſuppoſition, that the ſinging of the pſalms of the Old Teſtament is as inconſiſtent with the ſinging of thoſe that are ſuitable to the New Teſtament diſpenſation, as the obſervation of the ſeventh-day ſabbath is with that of the firſt day; that is, it is taken for granted, that the Old Teſtament pſalms are quite unſuitable to, and inconſiſtent with, the obſervation of ſome New Teſtament ordinance; which is in reality the matter in queſtion, the very thing denied. With regard to the paſſage in 1 Cor. xiv. it may be conſidered afterward. Only, when the objector talks of pſalms dictated in the firſt age of chriſtianity, the ſinging of which came in place of the ſinging of David's pſalms, it is natural to aſk, what is become of theſe pſalms? The producing of theſe would go a great way to determine the controverſy; becauſe, theſe muſt have been ſuch inſpired forms of pſalms, as we contend for. But this change, from the ſinging of David's pſalms to the ſinging of other inſpired forms of pſalms is nothing to the objector's purpoſe, without another change; and that is, a change from the ſinging of theſe inſpired forms, which the objector ſays were dictated in the firſt age of chriſtianity, to the ſinging of uninſpired forms, or mere human compoſures. It is for this, and not for the former change, that the objector is called upon to ſhew a divine warrant. While the objector cannot produce any of theſe inſpired

inspired forms of psalms dictated in the first age of christianity, nor yet shew a divine warrant for the transition from the singing of these to the singing of human compositures; we must do one of three things; we must either sing the the scripture-songs, or sing what we have no divine warrant to sing, or sing none at all. But we may do neither the second nor the last of these things: It remains, therefore, that we are still bound to do the first.

A candid disputant will never require his opponent to prove a negative; and it would be a very absurd way of managing the controversy with the Jews, to insist, that they ought to prove that the ceremonial law is not abrogated. However, it may not be improper to add some things, serving to shew what a new and strange doctrine is now broached about the abrogation of the singing of the book of psalms.

It is a great presumption against the pretended abrogation of the singing of this book in solemn worship, that the New Testament church has observed the singing of these psalms as a divine ordinance, and church-members have enjoyed sweet communion with God therein, for upwards of seventeen hundred years past, without the least appearance of a scriptural testimony against it. We allow, that for some time after the death of Christ, the practice of some of the ceremonial usages was in itself indifferent, that is, it was neither duty by any law in force enjoining it, nor sin by any law prohibiting it. But it may be observed, that there is no evidence, that, after the death of Christ, these ceremonial usages were ever allowed in the public worship of any christian assembly, as the singing of the book of psalms has constantly been. What was indifferent appears, from the xivth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, to have been the observation of certain meats and days, not by a particular church as such, but by certain individuals in their personal unconnected capacity. Hence the apostle speaks of what one did, and another neglected, just as it pleased him, ver. 2, 3, 5, 6. From this it follows, that the degree in which these legal rites obtained in the church to which this epistle is directed, did not affect the system of the New Testament ordinances. They neither corrupted the whole, nor set aside, nor altered any part of them. They made no part of the worship of the church,

church, nor were connected with it.* Again, these usages were no more indifferent, after the abrogation of the whole ceremonial law was fully manifested by the destruction of the temple, and the ruin of the political and ecclesiastical state of typical Israel. Till then, the Lord was willing to bear with the weakness of some professing christians. After that event the signification of his pleasure was complete, and the practice of these ceremonial rites became sinful, and no longer an object of christian forbearance. From the resurrection of Christ till that time, they had been dying; but now they became deadly. So that if the singing of the book of psalms was one of these abrogated rites; then it must now be a most criminal and pernicious practice. And can we suppose that, if it were so, the whole church of Christ could have persisted in it upwards of seventeen hundred years, without discovering any sense of the sinfulness of it; but rather accounting it a divine ordinance of distinguished importance, necessity and advantage? How comes it that the abrogation of the singing of the book of psalms was never till now, heard of in the christian church? How could the church, under the clear shining of New Testament light, and with the guidance of the Spirit of truth, who, according to Christ's promise, has all along remained in the church until this day, be so long entangled in such a gross error, as that of mistaking a mere abrogated ceremonial rite for moral worship? Is not this without a parallel or example in the history of the christian church?

It is remarkable, that the collection of psalms, which we have in the Old Testament, is not only called the book of psalms, Luke xx. 42. Acts i. 20. but also the psalms, Luke xxxiv. 44. and on occasion of a reference to a particular passage, we read of the 2d psalm, Acts xii. 33. and another psalm,

* See this more fully illustrated in Mr. Ramsay's Review. The Relief Scheme considered, by this worthy author, explains with much accuracy the nature of church communion, and rescues the xivth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, and many other passages of scripture, which the advocates for latitudinarian schemes attempt to press into their service. It well deserves the attentive perusal of christians at this day, particularly of professed Presbyterians.

psalm, verse 35. intimating that they are still to be known and acknowledged by the church, as they had been under the Old Testament, to be THE PSALMS, that is, the system of songs to be used by the church in her solemn worship.

Further, that the singing of the book of psalms was none of those things which were abrogated, when the New Testament dispensation took place, may be argued from the nature of it. Whatever was abrogated upon the commencement of that dispensation, belonged either to the judicial or ceremonial law. But the singing of the book of psalms belonged neither to the one nor to the other. It did not belong to the judicial law; because that prescribed the civil policy and government of the Israelites, and not matters of religious worship. Nor did it belong to the ceremonial law; because it wants the character of what was a duty, merely by virtue of that law.

For, in the first place, the things *themselves* that were enjoined by the ceremonial law, abstracting from what they prefigured, were carnal and unprofitable. The shedding of the blood of beasts, the burning of flour and incense, the distinction of meats and drinks; these rites, *in their own nature*, are of no religious or spiritual use. Hence the ceremonial law is said to consist of *carnal ordinances, imposed on the Israelites till the time of reformation.* But it would be no less than horrible impiety to speak in this manner of the singing of the scripture-songs. Surely the reading of the word of God is, *in its own nature*, a spiritual and profitable exercise: And the singing of such parts of that word as are called psalms, is an exercise, which, *in its own nature*, could not be less profitable or spiritual, than the reading of them. There is not one of the psalms, the singing of which, according to its true scope and meaning, is not profitable for doctrine, for reproof, or for correction, or for instruction in righteousness; these being the purposes for which all the parts of scripture, (the songs not excepted) are, *in their own nature*, profitable. But nothing that peculiarly belonged to the ceremonial law, and was to be abolished, was, *in its own nature*, spiritual or profitable for such purposes.

In the next place, the numerous and minute observances of the ceremonial law, *in themselves, or abstracting from their figurative use*, were a heavy burden; *a yoke*, says Peter,

which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear, Acts xv. 10. that is, considered *in themselves*, and without that prefiguration of Christ, which ceased at the beginning of the New Testament dispensation. But surely, neither the reading nor the singing of the word of God, which is the delight of his people, and their song in the house of their pilgrimage, could ever, *in itself*, be such a yoke or burden.

In a word, the warrant for reading the whole scriptures, and the warrant for singing the psalms thereof, go together; nor will the one cease to be a duty, till the other cease to be so also.

SECT. III. *Of the Knowledge which the Old Testament Church had of Christ.*

IT is observed in the Discourse on Singing Psalms, that the prophets under the Old Testament dispensation declared the name of Christ; that the faith of the saints corresponded with that declaration; that there was no acceptable drawing near to God but in Christ's name. Very opposite, indeed, is the doctrine taught in the following quotation: "The mercy of God was revealed from the beginning. "Salvation by grace—salvation as a free gift—an undeserved favour, was the hope of the saints of old. The "faithfulness of a promising God was the foundation of "their hope and trust; and it is the ultimate object of "faith, as well since, as before the coming of Christ. In "this the faith of the saints agree, and is one and the same "in all ages. The knowledge of God in a dispensation of "grace, and a sense of guilt and need of mercy, appear "to be absolutely necessary in a sinner, in order to his re-"turning unto God. But *the medium through which that "mercy an grace is communicated, and how the communica-"tion thereof is consistent with the Divine attributes and go-"vernment, appear to be the discovery of the New Testament.* "With regard to the design and use of types, it is evi-"dent, they were not intended to reveal their antitypes. "Without literal information, they could never convey "*the least idea* of the future things typified. The principal "end of the prophecies, and the *whole* design and use of "types, is for the benefit of those who should come after,

" and

" and not of those who live before the accomplishment of " the prophecies, or whilst the types exist; that is to say, " for the benefit of those among whom the great antitype " was to make his appearance, and of those who were to " compose his church to the end of time."*

What is denied in the quotation, and what we hold as the undoubted truth of God, is, that the revelation made of Christ in the promises, prophecies and types of the Old Testament, afforded church-members a *real* and *certain* knowledge of his person, of his obedience and suffering, through which grace and mercy have a blessed egress in the communication of all spiritual and saving blessings; and that this knowledge always belonged to the nature and exercise of true and saving faith. The truth on this head is evinced by such considerations as the following:

1. There was a revelation of Christ in the first gospel promise. God said to the serpent, *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed. He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.* In these words we may observe, 1. The great benefit promised, namely, the putting of enmity between the serpent and the woman, between the serpent's seed and her seed. This signified the removal of man's breach with God, which the devil had occasioned, by justification and sanctification. Enmity with the serpent signified peace and reconciliation with God. 2. The victory and triumph of Christ and of his people, was signified by the bruising of the serpent's head. 3. The way in which these benefits were to be procured, is pointed out in the prediction, that the seed of the woman was to have his heel bruised by the serpent; for *it behoved Christ to suffer.* 4. The union of the two natures in the person of Christ is here revealed; for the seed of the woman could not bruise the serpent's head, unless he were God; and he could not be bruised, unless he were man. 5. Here, too, we have the ground of his people's participation of the benefit of his sufferings; namely, their union with him as their covenant-head and representative, or their in-being in him. Hence he and they bear the same name: both are called *the seed of the woman.* 6. The mean is also intimated, of their actual union

* An Examination, &c. pag. 82, 93.

union and fellowſhip with him, namely, faith or believing; this being the only way of receiving what is here held forth to them in a free and unconditional promiſe; as the only way of apprehending light is by the eye, or of apprehending ſounds is by the ear.

But it will be ſaid, did our firſt parents underſtand all this to be included in theſe words? We anſwer, there is no reaſon to doubt but that they underſtood the benefit promiſed, to be reconciliation to an offended God, and deliverance from the guilt and power of ſin; for nothing elſe was ſuitable to what they felt to be their caſe. Nor can we doubt, that they underſtood a glorious Redeemer, a divine perſon, to be here revealed, who was well able to bruiſe the ſerpent's head, and to bring about their reconciliation to God. And if they put any meaning at all on the divine perſon's deſignation as the ſeed of the woman, and on the bruiſing of his heel, they muſt have underſtood, that he was to have a human nature wherein he was to ſuffer. That theſe words were ſpoken to the ſerpent for the ſake of our firſt parents, for their conſolation, is certain; and it is as little to be doubted, that, in order to anſwer this end, they muſt have apprehended the true meaning of them. We do not ſay how *clearly* or *diſtinctly* this meaning was apprehended by them, but only that it was *really* ſo.

This promiſe is a key to all that follows in the Old Teſtament. It is preſuppoſed in all the gracious revelations which were afterwards made to the church. Was any bleſſing promiſed? It was to be beſtowed for the ſake of the ſeed of the woman. Had church-members any hopes or confidence that God would accept their perſons and ſervices? It was wholly founded upon the revelation of the ſeed of the woman. Was any ceremonial inſtitution obſerved? It was ever conſidered as referring to the ſeed of the woman; to the bruiſing of his heel, or to the bruiſing the ſerpent's head, or to the benefits reſulting from it. Were they called to put away the evil of their doings, or to perform any duty? They were to ſet about it no otherwiſe than by a believing application of this promiſe. For we cannot ſuppoſe, that church-members, in after periods, unleſs when they were chargeable with an utter neglect of the appointed means, and had fallen into grievous error and corruption, would have

have less (but rather more) knowledge, than our first parents had, of this blessed and blessing seed.

2. We may argue from those places of scripture which represent Christ as the only way of salvation that ever was revealed to, or apprehended by faith. To this purpose is Act. iv. 12. *Neither is there salvation in any other: For there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.* It is here laid down as a truth of absolute universality, a truth under the Old Testament as well as under the New, *That there is no salvation in any other.* According to this text, if the fathers knew not Christ, neither did they know that salvation which never was, nor could be truly known otherwise than as in him, as included in his name, as wrought out by him. To the same purpose are the words of Christ in John xiv. 6. *I am the way, the truth, and the life: No man cometh to the Father but by me.* This is a proposition of the same universal extent. Coming to God by Christ, must include in it the knowledge of Christ as the way; for how can a person be said to come God by Christ as the way, while he is ignorant of Christ? Nor can any one be said to know Christ as the way, unless he knew, that Christ is the only true and proper propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of men; a sacrifice which is, indeed, *a savour of rest.*

3. That church-members, under the Old Testament, were acquainted with the justice-satisfying righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the ground of their pardon and acceptance with God, is evident from the account which the scripture gives of their justification; particularly in the examples of Abraham and David. In Gen. xv. 6. it is said, that *Abraham believed God,* as promising the blessed and blessing *seed,* and *it was imputed to him for righteousness.* It is the scope of the ivth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, to represent Abraham's justification as the exact pattern of ours: So that if we are justified before God by the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and apprehended by faith, so was Abraham. *Now,* says the apostle, *it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.* But, as

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Dr. Guise on the place justly asks, How can this be the same sort of faith with Abraham's, unless he had a respect to Christ and to what should be done by him, according to the notices he then had of these things? The apostle in the same chapter, shews, that David, in the 1st and 2d verses of the xxxiid psalm, *describeth the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works.* And what is that righteousness which is imputed to believers for their justification, and which admits none of their works, or inherent righteousness, to share with it in that matter? It is the same which is described in the iiid chap. of this epistle, even *the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe;* that righteousness of which our Immanuel said when he was dying, IT IS FINISHED. To these examples we may add the declaration of the apostle Peter, Acts x. 43. *To him give all the prophets witness, that whosoever believeth on him should receive remission of sins.* In these words, it is represented as the uniform doctrine of the prophets, that remission of sins or justification, is received in the way of believing in Christ, or in his name. And if we would know what is that name through which we are to receive remission of sins, one of the prophets answers, *This is the name whereby he shall be called,* THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

4. We may argue from the consideration which church-members must have had of the sacrifices under the law. It is often expresly declared, that these were to make atonement for the sins of the offerer. One thing was undeniably taught the Israelites by the appointment of sacrifices, namely, that *some* atonement or satisfaction was necessary in order to the forgiveness of sin: Heb. ix. 22. *Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.* This being supposed, the offerer of a sacrifice must have considered that sacrifice either as a real and sufficient atonement for his sin, or as a sign and figure of that which is so. But no church-member, who had any right apprehensions of God or of the evil of sin, or who attended to the word of God, or compared one part of it with another, could be supposed to entertain so absurd a thought as this, that such sacrifices could make a real and proper atonement for their souls: For *it is not possible that the*

the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin. Besides, many things, such as the Lord's declaring that he did not desire sacrifice, the frequent repetition of their offerings for the same sins, the experience they had of their unprofitableness for purging the conscience, served sufficiently to intimate, that they were not the real atonement, but appointed as signs or figures to direct their meditation and their faith to that which is indeed the real atonement. Nor could they err in their inquiry after it, if they duly remembered the divine person revealed in the first promise, who was to have his heel bruised, that he might bruise the head of the serpent. The Lord the Spirit enabled true believers among them to *look to the end of that which* was to be *abolished;* or to carry their views along the continuation of the legal sacrifices to the ending of them in the true atonement, in that offering and sacrifice, which is, to the justice of God and to the conscience of the sinner, *a savour of rest.* By the sacrifices of the Old Testament, Christ was not only represented, but sealed and applied to believers.

5. We may argue from the frequent accounts in the Old Testament, of the Angel of the covenant, or the Goel, that is, the Kinsman-redeemer, who could never, with the least colour of reason, be understood of any other than that divine person, the Son of God, who was to bruise the head of the serpent by means of his own sufferings; or who, through death, was to destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. This was the Angel of Jehovah, who wrestled with Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 24, 30. who called unto Abraham out of heaven, Gen. xxii. 15. who spake with Moses out of the bush, Exod. iii. 2, 6. Deut. xxxiii. 16. who conducted the Israelites into the land of Canaan, Exod. xxxiii. 20, 21. who is called the Angel of the Divine Face or Presence, Isa. lxiii. 9. and the Captain of the Lord's host, Josh. v. 13, 14, 15. In these passages, such things are ascribed to this Angel, as cannot, without blasphemy, be ascribed to any one who is not the Most High God. The modern Jews, having apostatized from the religion of their ancestors with respect to the doctrine of the Trinity, and the divinity of the Messiah, are as much puzzled with the passages now referred to, as the Socinians are with any

any declarations of Chriſt's divinity in the New Teſtament. See the XIVth Chap. of Buxtorf's Hiſtory of the Ark of the Covenant. One Rabbi owns, that he is conſtituted Guardian and Preſerver of the world and of Iſrael, and that all things are ſubject to him. Another owns, that his name is as the name of God, and that all intelligent and ſpiritual beings are dependent on him. How, or in what manner, ſays Buxtorf, all theſe things agree to any created angel, it behoves the Jews to determine; but ſurely theſe conceſſions afford arguments againſt them for the divinity of this Angel, and his equality with Him that ſent him.

The evidences of Chriſt's divinity are, it ſeems, ſo clear, in the Old Teſtament, that they cannot be evaded by the bittereſt enemies of chriſtianity. Thus the perſon of Chriſt could not be unknown to thoſe under the Old diſpenſation, who received the love of the truth; and, knowing his perſon, they could not fail to underſtand, in ſome meaſure, what is predicted concerning his ſufferings and his glory. They could not but know him as the medium of all the gracious and ſaving communications of God to ſinners of mankind.

Here we may take notice of that illuſtrious paſſage in the xixth chapter of the book of Job: *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the earth. And though, after my ſkin, worms deſtroy this body; yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee God. Whom I ſhall ſee for myſelf; and mine eyes ſhall behold, and not another; though my reins be conſumed within me.* Theſe words are ſuch as cannot well be underſtood of a temporal deliverance; and Job intimates the peculiar importance of them in this introduction: *Oh, that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book! that they were graven with an iron pen and lead, in the rock for ever!* Job had, at that time, no proſpect of his reſtoration to a proſperous wordly condition, Job vi. 8, 9, 11. vii. 7, 8. x. 20. 21. xvi. 22. xvii. 1, 15. and even in this chapter, ver. 10th, he ſays, *God hath deſtroyed me on every ſide, and I am gone: And mine hope hath he removed like a tree:* But he had the greateſt certainty of the redemption here ſpoken of. His expreſſion, *I know*, is parallel to that of the apoſtles, *We know and are ſure*, John vi. 69. 2 Cor. v. 1. He ſpeaks of it as a redemption that was ſure

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to be consummated at the last day, after his body had been the prey of worms and mingled with other dust; consummated by the seeing of God in his flesh, by the beholding of his Redeemer. Thus it was not a temporal, but a spiritual and eternal redemption, to be consummated in the glorious resurrection of the body, that he meant. The living Redeemer, therefore, whom he knew, was not a Redeemer from temporal adversity, but a Redeemer from the guilt and power of sin, even the same who had long before been promised under the name of *the Seed of the woman*, our Lord Jesus Christ, who *shall stand at the latter day upon the earth*, as a triumphant conqueror, having put all his and his people's enemies under his feet. The Goel, under the law, was one who was to act a generous part towards his poor kinsman; particularly to redeem his inheritance, if it was mortgaged or sold, by paying a price; to avenge his death if he was slain, and to marry his widow. And who, but our Lord Jesus Christ, is the Redeemer whom Job knew, and who would come up to the full import of this name? who would, by paying a price, redeem the inheritance of eternal life, which Job, as well as other children of fallen Adam, had forfeited; who would avenge him of his infernal adversary by bruising his head, and who would bethroth him to himself for ever.

6. We might reason from an induction of the particular predictions concerning the person, the humiliation, and exaltation of Christ; predictions which no art can accommodate to any other person or events; such as, Deut. xviii. 15. Psal. cx. Isai. ix. 6. liii. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Dan. ix. 24. Mic. v. 2. Zech. vi. 12, 13. That these prophecies were intended to be certainly understood of Christ, by those to whom they were first delivered, (though not so fully as they may be understood by church-members now under the New Testament) cannot reasonably be denied; if it be considered, that each part of the scriptures of the Old Testament was delivered to church-members, for the purpose of affording that reproof, correction, instruction or consolation, which their case at that time required: And it is evident, that no part of the word could answer any of these purposes, but in so far as it was understood. Hence it is so necessary, to the right understanding of particular passages in scripture, to

attend to the occasions on which they were first delivered. For example, in the prophecy which we have in Isa. vii. 14. *Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emanuel;* the birth of Christ was given as a sign to confirm and encourage the faith of the Lord's people as to the deliverance of Judah from the present designs of their combined enemies. But it is manifest, that it could not answer that end to those who did not truly understand the birth of Christ to be meant in these words.

7. The believing regard of the Old Testament saints to Christ, is often taken notice of in the New Testament. Thus in John viii. 55. Christ says to the Jews, *Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad.* The day of Christ, which Abraham saw, was the day of his appearing to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself: Nor does it seem to have been peculiar to Abraham, but was rather common to him, with all that walked in the steps of his faith. Abraham would, no doubt, impart his knowledge of Christ to his family and others. Again, in Heb. xi. 26. Moses is said to have *esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.* The apostle here evidently teaches, that it was the knowledge of Christ, of his person and grace, that made Moses consider the reproach he met with, as the reproach of Christ, as what he suffered in the way of communion with Christ and for his sake, and therefore more desireable than all the treasures of Egypt.

8. We may argue from this, that Christ and his apostles constantly referred their hearers to the Old Testament scriptures, as containing the same doctrine which they taught. Thus Christ says to the Jews, concerning the Old Testament scriptures, in John v. 39. *They are they which testify of me;* that is, of my person and offices, as Mediator. Nor was any new outward revelation necessary to their discovery of these things concerning Christ in the Old Testament scriptures; nothing more, in the way of outward means, was necessary, than searching the scriptures with a diligence becoming those who professed their dependence on them for eternal life. To the same purpose is our Lord's affecting expostulation with the two disciples, in Luke xxiv. 25, 26. *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his*

his glory? From this sharp expostulation it is a necessary consequence, that it was revealed in the words of the prophets that Christ ought to have suffered these things; and revealed so plainly, as to render the ignorance thereof in the disciples, and others who read or heard these words, utterly inexcusable. So our Lord reproved the Sadducees for their inattention to the evidence of the resurrection in the words which Moses heard out of the bush; for nothing less can be meant in our Lord's saying, that *Moses shewed that doctrine in the words he heard out of the bush*, and in his declaring that the error of the Sadducees arose from their inexcusable ignorace of *the scriptures*, as well as of the power of God. Remarkable to the same purpose is that which Paul declared before Agrippa, Acts xxvi. 22, 23. *Having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day; witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come, that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead.* Here two things are manifest: 1st. That the doctrines taught by the apostle were no other than what were to be found in the scriptures of the Old Testament; and particularly, that what he taught concerning the sufferings of Christ as actually accomplished, was no other than what had been taught by the prophets concerning them as things to come. 2dly. That they were taught in the Old Testament so plainly, that neither Agrippa, nor any other attentive reader of it, could deny them to be there; for this is the import of the apostle's appeal to Agrippa, ver. 26, 27.

9. We cannot admit this opinion, that the Old Testament predictions of the person, the sufferings and glory of Christ, were not understood by church-members under that dispensation, on account of the consequences with which it is attended. Such as, that a great advantage is hereby given to the Jews in our controversy with them, when we allow that Christ and his apostles put such a meaning upon certain passages of the Old Testament scriptures, as answered their purpose; and such as none before them either had or could have discovered. Besides, according to this opinion, the faith which views the promises, as the promises of God out of Christ, of God exercising mercy without any satisfaction to his law, or suitable demonstration of his justice,

tice, holineſs and hatred of ſin, may be ſaving faith; and the Socinians may be right in ſuppoſing no other faith to be neceſſary: For if men were juſtified and ſaved by ſuch a faith under the Old Teſtament, why not under the New? It is of no avail to ſay, that the New Teſtament revelation requires a new ſort of faith; for the queſtion is about the faith which is ſuitable to the ſinful and miſerable ſtate of man. And if men might be juſtified and ſaved by a faith in God abſolutely conſidered, there was no neceſſity either for the New Teſtament, or for the new faith which it is ſuppoſed to require.* Further, according to this ſcheme, we cannot underſtand how there could be any more obſcurity in the Old Teſtament revelation than in the New: For, according to it, the Old Teſtament ſaints had as clear a revelation of all that their faith reſpected, as the New Teſtament ſaints have of what their faith reſpects. The doctrine about the obſcurity of the Old Teſtament, that has been uſually taught in the Reformed churches, proceeds upon the ſuppoſition, that ſaving faith under the Old and New Teſtament is the ſame; that it is of the ſame nature; that it had the ſame object; that it always had the ſame real reſpect to the obedience and death of Chriſt: And that the ſame covenant of grace is ſet forth, more obſcurely in the one, and more clearly in the other. We may add, what was hinted in the Diſcourſe on Singing Pſalms, that the ſuppoſition, that ſinners could come unto God under any diſpenſation, without the knowledge of Chriſt's name, leads into the opinion

* We might go further, and aſſert, that, if men may have ſaving faith without any view of the blood of Chriſt as the only ſufficient ground upon which they can draw near to God; then that blood is not really ſuch a ground: For the ground of drawing near to God, which faith apprehends, muſt be a ſufficient ground; otherwiſe it would not be faith, but preſumption. Hence, if faith ever apprehend a ſufficient ground of drawing near to God without any view of the blood of Chriſt, then it follows, that his blood is not the *only* ground; ſome other is ſufficient: And therefore, the blood of Chriſt is not neceſſary to our drawing near to God, and we might have been ſaved without it. How ſhocking is this to chriſtians, who have been taught, that without the ſhedding of blood there is no remiſſion of ſins, no drawing near to God by any of fallen mankind.

opinion of salvation being attainable by the heathen, without ever hearing of his name, or of salvation by his blood; an opinion which manifestly tends to the total subversion of the christian religion. Upon the whole, we conclude, that there was under the Old Testament a real revelation of the same Redeemer, of the same justifying righteousness, of the same plan of salvation, which are revealed under the New.

SECT. IV. *Shewing that the Church's knowledge of Christ under the Old Testament Dispensation, is consistent with the differences between the Old and New Testament Dispensations.*

IN general, the difference is wholly in *the manner* of exhibiting Christ, and of administering the covenant of grace. That which was exhibited or administered is one and the same. But more particularly, the following differences are to be observed:

1. Under the Old Testament dispensation, the condition of the promise, or covenant of grace, was set forth as *not yet actually fulfilled*, in the obedience and death of Christ; and under the New, it is set forth *as already fulfilled*.

2. Under the Old Testament dispensation, church-members were led to the knowledge and application of Christ and his benefits, by *the practice* of types and figures: But they are led thereto under the New, *without* the practice of them. The church has now no more occasion for a way of learning suited to a state of childhood, by *the practice* of types and figures; as one that has learned to read has no more occasion, in order to come at what he reads, to spell the words, and divide them into syllables.

3. Though the things exhibited to faith under both dispensations be the same things, they are exhibited *more clearly and fully* under the New, the canon of scripture being now complete.

4. The Lord's way of instructing his people in spiritual and evangelical things, by shadows of them in outward and temporal things, and by the practice of the ceremonial law, made *the outward appearance* of the Old Testament dispensation *less spiritual and evangelical* than that of the New.

5. Though it is the duty of church-members under the New Testament, as well as it was so under the Old, to

make such a solemn profession, as the people of Israel made at Sinai, of renouncing the covenant of works, and of taking the Lord for their God, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace, and of being his willing people by virtue of that everlasting covenant, *in the way of publicly and jointly entering into a covenant of duty and gratitude;* yet there was much in *the matter* of the national covenant of the Israelites, that was peculiar to the Old Testament dispensation; particularly, their adherence, in that covenant, to the practice of the ceremonial and judicial laws, and their acknowledgment of the connexion between their adherence to these laws and their comfortable possession of the land of Canaan.

Hence two circumstances followed: *One* was, that there were extraordinary and peculiar dispensations of providence, as to the temporal condition of their nation as such, subservient to the observation of their covenant-engagements in profession and practice; which have no parallel in the case of any particular nation, as such, under the New Testament. Such, for example, was that dispensation of providence, by which they suffered no disadvantage from their lands lying untilled every seventh year. The *other* was, the restriction of the visible church, till the death of Christ, to the land of Canaan, and to the people of Israel; whereas, under the New Testament, the church is gathered out of all nations on the face of the earth.

6. The more plentiful out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, is a principal advantage of the New Testament dispensation above the Old. Here it is to be observed, that we do not speak of the extraordinary attainments of some of the most eminent saints under either dispensation; but of the ordinary allowance of church-members under both.

But the knowledge of Christ, of his righteousness and salvation, which we have ascribed to the Old Testament believers, is perfectly consistent with all these differences: With the first; for Christ and the fulfilment of the condition of the everlasting covenant, revealed in the words of promise, might be apprehended as truly before as after his incarnation:—With the second and third; for the knowledge of Christ, as the propitiatory sacrifice for sin, and as the Lord our righteousness, might be attained, by a way of learning more

more adapted to the state of childhood, as really, as by that which is more adapted to a state of manhood :—With the fourth ; for, amidst all those legal and carnal appearances in the Lord's way of dealing with his church under the Old dispensation, the things then taught, with regard to the way of salvation, were in reality the same spiritual and evangelical things which we are now taught under the New Testament dispensation :—With the fifth ; for setting aside the peculiarity of *the matter* of their engagement, with respect to the ceremonial and judicial laws, their engagement itself was an adherence to the covenant of grace, to the Lord as their God in Christ, which was of the same nature with the profession (which, on proper occasions, may still be made by swearing) of the New Testament church :—With the sixth ; because the same Spirit of Christ who is now in the church, was in it then, carrying on the same blessed work ; the difference is only in the measure, not in the nature of his operations.

SECT. V. *Shewing, that Believers under the Old Testament Dispensation, apprehended Christ as exhibited to them in the Types.*

WHILE men effect to make a type of every thing they meet with in the history of the Old Testament, in which there appears to be any analogy or resemblance to spiritual things, they are in danger of turning the sacred history into an allegory or fable, of utterly losing sight of the true and determinate sense of scripture, and of neglecting the solid knowledge and power godliness. Hence judicious divines agree, in cautioning us against the itch of multiplying types.

Yet that there were, under the Old Testament, persons and things appointed of God to be types, figures or shadows of him that was to come, is undeniable ; and therefore it behoves us diligently to inquire concerning them.

We may observe, in the first place, that the types were shadows or signs of Christ, or of what is in Christ : Col. ii. 17. *These are a shadow of things to come ; but the body is of Christ.*

In the second place, they were shadows of Christ as to come. Thus, in Heb. x. 1. the ceremonial law is described

as

as having a ſhadow of good things to come; ſuch as, Chriſt's making atonement for ſin by his blood, his entering by his blood into the holy place not made with hands, and his appearing in the preſence of God for us.

Hence we ſee the abſurdity of the notion, that the ſignification of the ceremonial inſtitutions was wholly unknown, till the New Teſtament diſpenſation took place; for in that caſe it would follow, that they were never to be conſidered as types at all. They could not be types, upon this ſuppoſition, under the Old Teſtament; ſince it is plain, that one thing cannot be conſidered as a type or ſhadow of another thing to come, unleſs there be a real knowlege, leſs or more, of that other thing, and particularly, that it is future. Nor are they types to us under the New Teſtament, to whom the good things, of which they were ſhadows, are not things to come, but things preſent or already come. Theſe ſhadows, indeed, are moſt frequently denominated *types*, from what they were to the church under the Old Teſtament diſpenſation; the apoſtle, however, in Gal. iv. denominates the hiſtory of Sarah and Hagar, from what it is to us under the New, calling it an allegory.

Hence, too, we may obſerve the difference between ſacraments and types. Both are ſigns. But ſacraments are ſigns chiefly of what is paſt or preſent; types, of what is to come.

In the third place, a type is not to be conſidered as repreſenting the antitype abſolutely, but only in ſome particular reſpect. Thus, the offering of a ſacrifice, under the law, repreſented, that Chriſt ſhould ſuffer unto death, and that his ſufferings ſhould be of a vicarious nature. But it could not repreſent Chriſt, our great high prieſt, offering himſelf. Moſes and Joſhua might be called typical ſaviours; but they afforded no repreſentation of Jeſus Chriſt, procuring ſalvation by the price of his own blood.

In the fourth place, we are not to conſider any thing as a type, unleſs it appears from the word of God, that he hath appointed it to be ſo. Sometimes a perſon, a thing, or a claſs of things, is expreſly declared to be typical. This is the caſe of the following particulars: Jonah's being three days and three nights in the whale's belly; Melchizedec's prieſthood, Pſal. cx. 4.; the Levitical prieſthood, Heb. viii.

4,

4, 5.; the tabernacle with its appurtenances, Heb. ix. 9.; the sacrifices that were offered there, Heb. ix. 13, 14, 23. That such a person or thing is a type, is sometimes the native consequence of what is expressly declared in scripture. Thus, when we find a singular and peculiar event recorded in the Old Testament, not only alluded to, but expressly made use of to represent or set forth our Lord Jesus Christ, we may conclude that it is a type. Such is the case of the brazen serpent, John iii. 14. and of the manna, John vi. 32. Again, persons or things, bearing the same names with our Lord Jesus Christ, may be justly considered as types, provided that communication of names be manifestly on account of some analogy or resemblance in them to the character of the great Antitype, as the Mediator of the new covenant, or the Saviour of his people. Thus the successor of Moses bears the name of Joshua or Jesus, because he was like our Lord Christ in bringing his people to the promised rest, Heb. iv. 8. Christ is several times called David, because the covenant of royalty, made with David, was a shadow of the covenant of grace and promise made with Christ, Ezek. xxxiv. 23. and xxxvii, 24. Hos. iii. 5. Thus, because the paschal lamb was a type of Christ, he is called our Lamb, and Passover, John i. 29. 1 Cor. v. 7. He bears the same name with the mercy-seat, Rom. iii. 25. compared with Heb. ix. 5. in the original Greek. Again, when the words which the Holy Spirit employs in describing the eminence or dignity of a person in the Old Testament, are manifestly too emphatical and sublime to be restricted to him, and the very same words are used in the New Testament in setting forth the excellency of our Lord Jesus Christ, we may warrantably conclude that person to have been a type of Christ. Thus, by comparing Isa. xxii. 22. with Rev. iii. 7. it is evident, that Eliakim was a type of Christ. We shall only add here, that nothing ought to be considered as a type, but such a prefiguration of something belonging to Christ as was always, from the time of its institution, conducive to the faith and piety of the church of God.

Here it is objected, "that we, having been from our "childhood, instructed in the way of salvation through a "Mediator, are also early taught to apply the prophecies "and types of the former dispensation to this Mediator; "but

" but the Jewish church was in vastly different circumstances. " The Jews had no light into the mediatorial and vicarious " character of the Lord Jesus Christ, but what Old Testa- " ment scriptures, by themselves, would afford. Nay, " during the far greater part of their church's continuance, " they had little more than the five books of Moses."*

Answer. That the faith of the saints under the Old Testament had the same living Redeemer, the same justifying righteousness for its object, that it has under the New, has been shewn to be a revealed truth, which we are to believe, even though we should never be able to say particularly, how or by what means, or in what degree the Lord was pleased to bring them to that knowledge. We are not to seek to be wise above what is written. Some things, however, may be observed on this subject, without incurring this censure.

The ancient Israelites did not attain the knowledge of Christ by the *Cabalistic art*, by which the Jews pretend to extract the knowledge of mysteries from superstitious observations on words and letters; nor by their oral law, which they pretend Moses did not deliver to their fathers in writing, but by word of mouth. These are supposed to be among *the fables and vain babblings*, against which the apostle cautions Timothy. By these the Jews have hardened themselves in their apostacy.

But in general, that the Lord was leading them, by these types and figures, to something of an infinitely higher and more important nature, might be understood by such as seriously considered to what purpose such a variety of outward and carnal things, so much bodily exercise about sacrifices and purifications, was enjoined. They were taught then, as well as now, that God is a spirit, and that he must be worshipped in spirit and in truth. They understood, that it would be blasphemy once to imagine, that the Infinite One stood in any need of such bodily services, or that, in themselves, they were any gratification to him. True believers must then have been persuaded, that the Lord utterly rejected

* The writings of Samuel, David and Solomon, were not *a little*, but a good deal more than the five books of Moses. Now, the period from Solomon to Christ is far greater than that from Moses to Solomon.

jected their ceremonies and sacrifices, however elaborate and costly, unless, in these, they had a regard to things that were couched under them, or represented by them; to spiritual things, agreeable to the spirituality and purity of the divine nature. Psal. l. 13. *Will I eat the flesh of bulls; or drink the blood of goats?*

Let us seriously consider to what conclusions such thoughts must have led a pious Old Testament worshipper, instructed in the true knowledge of God, and of the Seed of the woman, who was to bruise the serpent's head, while he was bringing his lamb or kid, to be offered as an atonement for his sin, and as an offering of a sweet-smelling savour to the Lord.

But, more particularly, we observe, in the first place, that there is no reason to doubt, that the patriarchs and prophets taught, in some measure, the meaning of the types, as pointing to Christ and his salvation. Surely Noah, who was a preacher of righteousness, and Abraham, who is particularly commended for his care in the instruction of his children and his household after him, would not fail to inform their respective families, of the meaning and design of the sacrifices they offered. As to the prophets in general, it was their work and office to call the attention of the people to Christ, as set forth in the types and prophecies. *To him gave all the prophets witness.* They could not be silent with regard to that salvation, *of which* (we are told in 1 Pet. i. 10.) *they enquired and searched diligently.* Their *lips kept knowledge;* and the people *received* the explication of *the law at their mouth.* The same knowledge of the true meaning of the ceremonies and sacrifices, seems to have been taught in the schools where the sons of the prophets were educated. The usefulness of the ancient prophets, in this respect, to the Old Testament church, was, probably, one reason why they are called *prophets* in the New Testament who exercised their extraordinry gifts in opening and explaining the prophetic visions of the Old; in which gospel truths are emblematically set forth.

Secondly. The careful and attentive consideration of the types, was another mean of attaining the knowledge of what was prefigured by them. Believers, under that dispensation, did not rest in the external part or surface of these observances;

ces; an evil which has been one principal cause of the apostacy and incorrigibleness of the Jews. Informed by the patriarchs and prophets, that such and such things were to be regarded as types, an Old Testament believer would be sure to consider them carefully, to view them on all sides, to ponder the reference they had to him who was to come, till he entered into the spirit and evangelical import of them.

Thirdly. Saving and spiritual illumination was also necessary to a profitable discernment of what was couched under the types. It was not every member of the visible church that attained this peculiar knowledge of divine mysteries; but they only to whom the Lord was pleased to give ears to hear, eyes to see, and hearts to understand. *The secret of the Lord* was always *with them that feared him.* To them it was given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

Fourthly. The last mean we shall mention, was fervency and perseverance in prayer. The peculiar difficulty of knowing the mind of God in the types and prophecies, would make believers incessantly pray with the psalmist, *Open mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.**

SECT. VI. *Whether Psal. xix. 14. lxxxiv. 9. and Dan. ix. 17. be instances of the use which the Saints under the Old Testament made of Christ's Name in Prayer.*

IN the Discourse on Singing Psalms, the last verse of the xixth psalm, was adduced as an instance of the use which believers made of Christ's name under the Old Testament. To this it has been objected, "That the term Redeemer, is "often applied in the Old Testament to Jehovah the God "of Israel, without any reference to the Messiah; and it is "thus applied on account of deliverances, public and pri"vate, which God had wrought for his people, Deut. vii. 8. "Psal. lxxviii. 35. Jer. l. 34. And there is no reason to "understand it any otherwise here. David prays to God "under the character of his Redeemer, as he had often de"livered him from imminent danger. Besides, whoever "was the person he addresses, in the name of another, he "does not plead with God for Christ's sake, or with the Father

* Saldeni Otia Theologica.

" Father in the name of the Son, according to the Saviour's " direction ; and therefore is nothing to the purpose."

Answer. The temporal deliverances of the church, particularly that of Israel out of Egypt, are called *redemptions, improperly and figuratively* ; as they were fruits and effects of that redemption, strictly and properly so called, which is effected by our Lord Jesus Christ ; and *those* might well serve to lead the minds of the Israelites to the believing contemplation of *this*.* And therefore, while it is allowed, that the church, and particular believers, under the Old Testament, took occasion from temporal deliverances to celebrate God in Christ as their Redeemer, we can by no means admit, that the worker of such a temporal deliverance was all that they meant by that name : 1. Because this is not adequate to the proper meaning of the word, which, it cannot be denied, refers to a payment of a ransome. 2. Because here and in other places of the Old Testament, the Lord is called the church's Redeemer, absolutely, without reference to any temporal deliverance. 3. Because a merely temporal Redeemer was not such a one as the sinful and miserable case of man required. 4. Because whatever occasion a temporal deliverance might give a person or people to look to God as their Redeemer ; yet it does not follow, that this was the adequate reason of the designation. Were a beggar to receive alms from a king, the incident might induce the beggar to call him a good and bountiful king ; but it would be strange for

* " The redemption of Israel from Egypt, was not wrought," says Turretine, "without regard to the ransome which Christ gave. " For, as it is certain that all the special promises and deliverances " granted to the ancient people of God, proceeded upon the gen- " eral promise of the Messiah to come, (they having no ground to " look for any such favour and help from God, otherwise than as " he was propitious and reconciled to them in Christ) so it is not " to be doubted, that the fathers obtained this great and remark- " able deliverance thro' Christ " *De Satisfactione Christi, Part I. Sect* 35. " When the God of Israel," says Vitringa, " is called Goel, " that is, Redeemer, it is always with regard to that arcanum, " or mystery of the divine essence, which is properly the great " mystery of faith ; namely, that there is in God, and with God, " a glorious person, to whom God has committed the redemption " and salvation of his chosen people ; a person who performs for " them the part of a kinsman-redeemer, according to the law of " such redeemers under the Old Testament. *In Isaiam*, xli. 15.

for any perſon to infer, that the beggar called him a king, merely becauſe he had given him alms.

In this verſe of the ſixth pſalm, it ſeems plain, than in the names that the pſalmiſt gives to God, of *his Strength, and his Redeemer*, he ſaw the ground he had to pray and hope, that the words of his mouth and the meditation of his heart would be accepted of God. He had acknowledged himſelf a poor ſinner, chargeable with innumerable errors and ſecret faults; and therefore, he could not ſee the ground of his acceptance with God in himſelf; he could ſee it only in Chriſt, his Strength and his Redeemer.

Nor is it any objection, that he, whom the pſalmiſt calls his Strength and his Redeemer, is no other than he to whom this prayer is addreſſed; for, by faith, the pſalmiſt ſaw Chriſt as his Strength and his Redeemer in the Father, and the Father in him, according to what Chriſt ſays in John xiv. 9, 10. *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father: Believeſt thou not, that I am in the Father, and Father in me.*

In the Diſcourſe on Singing Pſalms, the 9th verſe of the lxxxivth pſalm was quoted as an inſtance of the regard which Old Teſtament ſaints had to Chriſt in their worſhip: To this an objector oppoſes the following paraphraſe: "Cauſe the light of thy gracious countenance to ſhine "again on the face of thine anointed--who now breathes "his earneſt requeſt before thee. Haſt thou not cauſed "thy ſacred oil to be poured on my head, and thereby "deſignated me to be the ruler of thy people: and wilt "thou not grant me the privilege which the meaneſt of "thy people enjoys."

Anſwer. The objector appears to have no good reaſon for diſſenting from ſo many valuable commentators, who underſtand the expreſſion, *Look on the face of thine anointed*, of God's looking on the face of Chriſt, whom the pſalmiſt regarded as his Mediator and Advocate: 1. Becauſe our Lord Jeſus was, even then, God's anointed one, the Chriſt, as the undertaking Head and Surety of the new covenant. So he is called by David in the ſecond pſalm, *Why do the people imagine a vain thing againſt the Lord and againſt his anointed?* Where is alſo a manifeſt correſpondence between the phraſe here uſed, and that of the apoſtle in 2 Corinth. iv. 6. *the face of Jeſus Chriſt.* 2. The phraſe, *to look upon*, here ſignifies, to

to regard with acceptance and complacency, as a similar expression, is used in 2. Kings iii. 14. Surely David, who said, *Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified*, would be far, very far from thinking that he was acceptable *in himself*, before such a holy Lord God. The psalmist was deeply sensible, that, for God to look upon him in himself, as a child of fallen Adam, covered with the guilt and pollution of sin, would have been to him utter destruction: For he will by no means clear the guilty. 3. This view of the words agrees best with the context; for the words, *look upon the face of thine anointed*, may well be considered as the psalmist's plea for the hearing and the answering of prayer. We have no reason to suppose, that the psalmist would ground his suit upon any thing short of Christ: For the anointing of David to be king over Israel, was but a type or shadow of Christ's mediatorial office, and the psalmist's remembrance of the former could be no otherwise useful to him in his dealing with God, than as it served to promote and encourage his faith in the latter. But it is more unreasonable still, to suppose that the whole church would make David's appointment to a temporal kingdom, without any regard to Christ, their plea for the hearing of prayer; for this is the language, not only of David, but of the whole church militant: *Behold, O God, our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.**

The Discourse on the Singing of Psalms has been censured for representing Christ to be meant in Dan. ix. 17. *for the Lord's sake*; and it has been objected, "that, if we take this "in connexion with the following context, it will not ap- "pear that Daniel had any reference to the Saviour in it; "for, speaking more explicitly in this respect, he says, in ver.

* "He (the psalmist) has an eye to the Mediator; for of him I "rather understand these words, *Look upon the face of the Messiah*, "thine anointed one, for of his anointing David spake, Psal. xlv. "7." *Henry on the place. Respicere faciem Christi*, Psal. lxxxiv. 9. qui Mediator noster et Salvator noster est, et propter quem sibi benefieri David petit optatque, vocans eum Servum Domini, 1 Paralip. xvii. 19. et Verbum Domini, 2 Sam. vii. 21. Glassius. Quibus verbis docemur non aliter nobis propitiari Deum, quam ubi Christus in medium prodit, cujus aspectu discutiuntur omnes vitiorum nostrorum nebulæ. *Calvinus in locum.*

" ver. 18 and 19. *We do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear, O Lord, forgive, O Lord hearken and do, &c.* But " if we should even suppose that Daniel had here a view to " the Messiah, yet the name Lord, which he uses, is a gen- " eral term; it imports dominion in general, and is perfect- " ly consistent with an ignorance of Christ's mediatorial " and vicarious character, as revealed in the New Testament, " and according to which christians are to use his name ex- " plicitly in pleading with God."*

Answer. With the christian church in general, we believe, that *for the Lord's sake*, means for Christ's sake: 1. Because we have a plurality of divine persons here intimated. The prayer is formally directed to God in the person of the Father, for the sake of the Lord, the second person of the glorious Trinity, the Mediator. Christ is frequently called THE LORD, Psal. cx. 1. John xx. 28. Luke ii. 11, &c. 2. Because Christ was always the church's way of coming to God, and of obtaining salvation, as hath been shewn from John xiv. 6. and other places. *For the Lord's sake*, that is, says Mr. Henry, " for the Lord Christ's sake; for the sake " of the Messiah promised, who is the Lord. So the most " and best of our christian interpreters understand it. For " the sake of Adonai. So David called the Messiah, Psal. " cx. 1.; and mercy is prayed for the church, " for sake of " the Son" of man, Psal. lxxx. 17. and " for thy words " sake," 2 Sam. vii. 21."†

The objector's interpretation makes the expression, *for the Lord's sake*, to be put instead of *for thy own sake*; hereby the phrase is supposed to be catachrestical, or a departing from the usual propriety of language, without any necessity; for the *proper* sense is perfectly agreeable to the connexion here, and to what is taught in other places of scripture. The name Lord, or Adonai, which is here used, is given to Christ as Mediator, in Psal. cx. 1. and has a particular

* Examination, &c. pag. 82, 83.

† In Psal. lxxx. 15, *Ve gnal ben*, (for which, in our translation, we have, *and the branch*) is rendered by Junius and Tremellius, *and for the sake of the Son*; and by the Chaldee Paraphrase, *and for the sake of the King Messiah. See Pool's Synopsis.*

ticular respect to that property in and dominion over his people, which is founded in his purchase of them with his own blood. When Daniel fought the turning away of the Lord's anger from his church and people, and the manifestation of his special favour for the sake of the Messias, he surely hoped that God would grant his request for the sake of the Messias as the Mediator and Surety of his people; because, abstracting from his mediatorial office, he was no Messias, and there was nothing more in him that could be a ground of hope to his people, than there was in God absolutely considered. Sinners had nothing to expect for his sake, otherwise then as he was Mediator and Surety; and therefore Daniel, who is here confessing his own sin, and that of his people, must have considered him as the Mediator and Surety of himself and his people: Otherwise he had no ground to seek or expect mercy and salvation for his sake. All this was manifestly inconsistent with absolute ignorance of his mediatory office and vicarious righteousness.

The expression in the next verse, instead of leading us away from Christ, leads us to him; because all the saving mercies, that God has for any of Adam's ruined family, are wrapt up in Christ; they are sure mercies of David, or of our Lord Jesus Christ, Isa. lv. 5. compared with Jude 21. So that the expression, *for thy great mercies*, must be understood as implying, *for Christ's sake*, or, *for his righteousness sake.*

SECT. VII. 1 *Cor. ii.* 7, 8, 9. *Rom. xvi.* 25. *and Heb. ix.* 8. *considered.*

OBJECTION. "The gospel in general is called a mystery, "hidden till the age of the apostles, in 1 Cor. ii. 7, 8, 9. "The prophet Isaiah, whose words the apostle quotes, al- "though he had given the clearest predictions concerning "the Messiah of any of the prophets, declares, that these "did not give a clear view of the gospel; as if he had "said, From all that hath been revealed as yet, just con- "ceptions of that sublime plan, and of the method by which "it is to be accomplished, cannot be obtained. But, says "the apostle, the Spirit of God, who alone penetrates and "knows the deep things of God, the profound mysteries "of his counsels and his gospel, hath revealed them unto

" his apoſtles. Perfectly to the ſame purpoſe is his declar-
" ation to the Romans, (xvi. 25.) *The revelation of the*
" *myſtery which was kept ſecret ſince the world began, but*
" *is now made manifeſt*, &c."

ANSWER. If the objector means, that the expreſſions, *hidden* or *kept ſecret*, ſhould be underſtood abſolutely, he agrees with the Socinians; who deny that any promiſe of eternal life was ever made to the people of God under the Old Teſtament.* For ſurely eternal life is one of theſe things prepared for them that love God, or rather the ſum of them. From Rom. xvi. 25, 26. the Socinians draw this inference, that the goſpel was hid in the times of the Old Teſtament, and was not at all revealed.† Thus, if the expreſſion *hid* or *kept ſecret*, in theſe paſſages, be taken abſolutely, and without reſtriction, they will prove all that the Socinians maintain; and will contradict what the objector ſeems to allow, namely, that the Old Teſtament church had the promiſes of everlaſting ſalvation. So that the objector himſelf cannot, conſiſtently with his own conceſſions, inſiſt upon theſe expreſſions being taken abſolutely. Conſidering then what reſtriction the analogy of faith, and the coherence of the apoſtle's words require, we conclude, that the myſtery being kept ſecret ſince the world began, ſignifies, that many ages paſſed away before the predictions concerning the death of Chriſt and the calling of the Gentiles were fulfilled; before the myſtery of Chriſt was revealed in that clear and diſtinct manner wherein it is revealed under the New Teſtament diſpenſation, and before the revelation of it was extended to the Gentiles. The laſt of theſe particulars ſeems to be chiefly intended in Rom. xvi. 25. as agreeing beſt with theſe words, *by the ſcriptures of the prophets, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.* From theſe words we learn two things: 1ſt, That the goſpel was revealed to the Old Teſtament

* Bonum æternæ vitæ, (ſays Smalcius) nuſquam in vetere fœdere populo aperte promiſſum fuit.

† Juxta revelationem myſterii ſæculis temporum taciti. Ergo evangelium temporibus veteris Teſtamenti latuit, et nulla ratione revelatum fuit. (Hoornbek anſwers) Hoc contra ipſum hunc textum eſt, quo dicitur, evangelium per ſcripta prophetica manifeſtatum. *Compend. Socinianiſmi Confut. lib. ii. cap. i.*

Testament church; because it *is made known by the scriptures of the prophets;* and 2dly, That the gospel is made known to us Gentiles, as well as it was to Israel of old, *by the scriptures of the prophets.*

We may further observe, that the scope of the apostle in 1 Cor. ii. is to represent the wisdom of God in the gospel, as opposite to the wisdom of this world, and as what neither is nor can be known by natural man; not even by the princes of the world, or those who are supposed to possess the greatest share of worldly wisdom; such as Herod, Pontius Pilate, the chief priests and scribes, who crucified the Lord of glory. From the scope of this chapter it is also evident, that the revelation of these things spoken of in ver. 10. is to be understood not only of what was peculiar to Paul as an apostle, but also, and chiefly, of what was common to him with all true believers: For there is a heavenly revelation by the Spirit of grace, an internal and supernatural illumination of the mind, which is necessary to the production of saving faith, whereby *we know the things that are freely given us of God.* This doth not distinguish the Old Testament dispensation from the New, but regenerate from unregenerate men. The apostle says, in the name of all true believers, *God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit.*

As to the passage quoted from Isaiah, it cannot be inferred from it, that either the spiritual blessings of the covenant of grace, or the sacrifice of Christ as the channel of their communication, was altogether unknown under the Old Testament; but only that the greatness and excellency of both these are what natural men cannot have any just conceptions of, and what believers themselves, though they truly know them, cannot fully comprehend, 1 John iii. 1, 2. Psalm xxxi. 19. The objector himself will hardly deny, that the things that God hath prepared for them that love him, such as, perfect likeness to God, and uninterrupted communion with him, were really known and hoped for by the people of God under the Old Testament dispensation.

Objection. "The extraordinary dispensation of the "Spirit, mentioned John xvi. 12, 13, 14. proves that these "things had not been revealed before, namely, *all the truth,* "*and the things of Christ.* Paul, in unfolding the typical "meaning of the Old Testament institutions, Heb. ix. ex-

"pressly

" preſly aſſerts this truth in the 8th verſe; for after giving " a relation of the tabernacle furniture, prieſthood, offerings, " &c. he ſays, The Holy Ghoſt thus ſignifying, that the " way into the holieſt of all was not yet made manifeſt, " while as the firſt tabernacle was yet ſtanding: As if he " had ſaid, by the very frame and conſtitution of the Jew- " iſh ritual of worſhip and ordinances, the Holy Spirit, in " fact, intimated that the grand ſcheme was not yet diſco- " vered, and that it was not to be known whilſt that œcon- " omy continued."

ANSWER. We muſt diſtinguiſh between a *more clear and illuſtrious* manifeſtation, (denoted by the original word πεφανερωσθαι) of the way into the holieſt of all, and ſome *real* diſcovery of it. The want of the former, while the firſt tabernacle was ſtanding, is, we allow, aſſerted by the apoſtle, but by no means the want of the latter.

The paſſage in John xvi. 12, 13, 14. points out the end for which the Spirit is given to believers, both under the Old and New Teſtament diſpenſations; for that he was given to believers under the Old diſpenſation, is undeniable, Numb. xiv. 25. Hag. ii. 5. Pſal. li. 11, 12. and cxliii. 10. Now it was always the work and office of the Spirit towards his church and people, to guide them into all the articles of truth revealed in his word, to teach them the things of Chriſt, the things which Chriſt had ſpoken unto them. We allow, that our Lord's words have reſpect to the more plentiful effuſion of the Spirit under the New Teſtament, and to his giving believers more clear and diſtinct views of Chriſt's obedience unto death, as the only way of their acceſs to God and acceptance with him. But this is nothing to the purpoſe of proving that, under the Old diſpenſation, they had no juſt or determinate views of that matter at all.

In fine, to uſe the words of a judicious writer, " the gift " of righteouſneſs, and ſalvation through the promiſed Meſ- " ſiah, was as really brought near to all within the pale of " the viſible church during the patriarchal and Moſaic, as " they are to us now under the chriſtian œconomy. Though " ſtill it muſt be acknowledged, that this latter diſpenſation " of grace, is far more clear, glorious and extenſive, than " the former."

SECT.

SECT. VIII. *Of the Knowledge which the Disciples had of Christ during the time of his Humiliation.*

THEY greatly err, who measure the faith of the Old Testament church by the ignorance which prevailed at the time of Christ's coming. The prophetical doctrine was then obscured and almost buried in the thick darkness of ignorance and human traditions. The interpreters of the law had taken away the key of knowledge, Luke xi. 52. They propogated an opinion concerning the temporal kingdom of the Messiah, which was diametrically opposite to the faith of God's ancient people. It is as absurd to estimate the measure of the church's faith under the whole of the Old Testament dispensation, by the state of it at the time now referred to, as it would be to estimate the measure of her faith under the New, by those sparks of knowledge, which, before the Reformation, remained amidst the thick darkness of popery, when the doctrine of the gospel was only not quite extinguished. Our judgment of the measure of faith that was delivered to the Old Testament saints, ought to be regulated by the prophetic doctrine, which, as it is expressed in the scriptures of the Old Testament, is able, according to the apostle, 2 Tim. iii. 15. to make men wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Hence it was, that Christ imputed the ignorance of the disciples as to his sufferings and entrance into glory, to their foolishness and slowness of heart to believe all that the prophets had spoken, Luke xxiv. 25, 26.*

The ignorance of the disciples, who accompanied our Lord in the course of his personal ministry, has been offered as an objection to the doctrine we have delivered concerning the faith of the Old Testament saints. But surely, as hath been just now observed, our judgment in this matter ought to be regulated by the prophetic doctrine, and by the examples of the exercise of faith recorded in the Old Testament. And there are three things which ought to be attended to in the case of the disciples. 1. The Jewish church was then sunk into a state of gross ignorance and corruption. On this account,

* Cloppenburgii Schola Sacrificiorum, pag. 89.

count, we may well suppose the disciples to have been very ignorant, and possessed with many prejudices, (such as, that with respect to the temporal grandeur and dominion of the Messiah) when they began to follow Christ; and he was pleased to bring them out of that state of ignorance, not all at once, but by degrees. This is undoubtedly one reason why the measure of their knowledge appears so small, during his state of humiliation. 2. It seems improper to estimate the measure of knowledge, which the disciples really possessed, by some things which they uttered in peculiar cases of darkness and temptation. Such was the case of the disciples going to Emmaus, when they said, *We trusted it had been he who should have redeemed Israel.* When Peter *took Jesus, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee Lord; this shall not be unto thee;* it appears from what our Lord said to him, that he was under the prevailing influence of a temptation of Satan, Mat. xvi. 22, 23. Sometimes the knowledge which they really had, was not in exercise, or so much overpowered with contrary darkness and unbelief, that they were ready to deny that they had such knowledge. Of this we have a remarkable instance in John xiv. 4, 5. Christ says, *Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?* 3. There was a peculiar dispensation in the case of the disciples, whereby their knowledge of the mystery of Christ was stinted to a small measure, till after the resurrection and ascension of Christ, or till the eminent outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Some passages intimate, that there was sometimes in their case a peculiar withdrawing of the enlightening influences of the Spirit, which were necessary to a right apprehension of our Saviour's words, Mark vi. 52. *They considered not the miracle of the loaves, for their hearts were hardened.* Luke xviii. 34. *And they understood none of these things: And this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.* Hence it is said, that, *when he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered what he had spoken about raising the temple of his body; and that they believed the scriptures, and the word which Jesus had said.* This is not to be understood as if they had not truly believed before; but that their knowledge and faith had been formerly

merly very indistinct, and much mingled with contrary prejudices.

Here it may be proper to take notice of an objection, which hath been made, to what is said in the Discourse on Singing Psalms, concerning John xvi. 24. *Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name.* "Our Lord's expression," says the objector, "cannot be referred to any personal exercise "or occasional weakness of grace in his disciples; because "he tells them, the deficiency would be removed in the day "of Pentecost, by illumination. *The time cometh, when I "shall shew you plainly of the Father. At that day ye shall "ask in my name.* But if the view of our Lord's words in "the Discourse on Singing Psalms be just, the cure must "have been by sanctifying quickening grace, and not by "illumination, as the Saviour saith."*

Answer. It was shewn in the Discourse, that the negative particle is, in scripture, often taken comparatively; and surely it cannot be taken absolutely here; for there could be no acceptable asking of the Father without coming to him; and no coming to him but by Christ, or, what is the same thing, in the name of Christ. So that if the disciples had hitherto made no use at all of Christ's name in asking, they had never come to the Father, nor put up one acceptable petition to him; they had never once called upon God in truth; a supposition which every one must allow to be grossly absurd. But what our Lord intends is, that the use which they had hitherto made of his name in asking, was little or none, compared with what they would be enabled to make of it, through the distinct and clear views of it, which they would obtain, when the Holy Spirit should be poured out abundantly upon them. The objector speaks strangely, as if he imagined, that the influences of the Holy Spirit poured out on the day of Pentecost, were enlightening, but not sanctifying quickening influences. But surely, though some formalists might, even then, have a sort of illumination of their natural understanding which was not sanctifying; yet there was an illumination in the knowledge of Christ undoubtedly included in our Lord's promise, which the apostles and other true believers were partakers of,

* An Examination, &c. pag. 84.

of, in its own nature quickening and sanctifying; an illumination, which, according to the measure of it, would make them act faith, and dispose them to ask largely in Christ's name. Of this he said to the woman of Samaria, *If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that said to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.* And again to the same purpose, *Every man that heareth and learneth of the Father cometh unto me. Beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image.*

SECT. IX. *Inferences from the Church's Knowledge of Christ under the Old Testament Dispensation.*

FROM what has been advanced concerning the reality of the church's knowledge of Christ, it is evident, that it was one and the same covenant of grace, which, under the Old Testament, was exhibited in word, sacraments, ceremonies and sacrifices, and which is now under the New, more clearly exhibited in the word and sacraments only. The proper condition of that everlasting covenant, namely, Christ's obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, was then as much present to God, as it is now; and was made present to the faith of worshippers in the typical sacrifices. All the promises were, then as well as now, *yea and amen in Christ Jesus to the glory of God.* Thus the gospel, or covenant of grace, exhibited or preached unto the fathers, was the same which is preached to us, as the apostle declares, Heb. iv. 2.

Hence we see the error of those who represent the religion of the Old Testament and that of the New as two different religions, saying, that Moses was the founder of the one, and Jesus Christ of the other. All the truly pious, from the beginning of the world, were, upon the matter, christians. The fact, that the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch, does not imply that there were no christians under the Old Testament dispensation; but that the disciples at that time were enabled to be remarkably explicit and particular, as a church, in professing their adherence to the cause of Christ, and in bearing testimony against the gross apostacy of the Jews from the religion and hope of their fathers.

Hence,

Hence, too, it appears that the church of God, under the Old and New Testament dispensations, is one. It was the same church, which was formerly under an obligation to the practice of the ceremonial law, and which is now freed from that obligation; as the same person may be called to the performance of several duties in one situation, which he is not called to in another. Jesus Christ was King and Head of the church under the Old Testament as well as under the New. Zech. ix. 9. *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion: shout, O daughter of Jerusalem, behold thy King cometh;* he who is, and hath been thy King from the beginning of thy church-state. The person of Christ was the foundation on which, as, revealed in the first promise, the church was at first erected; on which, as farther declared by the prophets and apostles, it has stood all along; and on which it will stand to the end of the world; according to that remarkable word, *On this rock*, namely, my divine person, *will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* The building upon this foundation consists of believers; to whom Peter says, *Ye are built up a spiritual house.* It is an invariable maxim in the church of Christ, from the beginning to the end, that it should have no other doctrine than that which is taught in the divine word; no other form of worship or of government than that which is delineated and appointed there. Hence it must be directly contrary to the welfare of the church, under the New Testament dispensation as well as under the Old, to attempt to change the ordinances, or to introduce something into the form of the worship or government of the church, which God never appointed, however plausible it may seem to human wisdom.

When the Gentiles were called to the faith of Christ, they became one body with the Old Testament church; they became *fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God;* making the same profession of faith with Abraham, David and other saints, recorded in the Old Testament, and being thus brought into the same house or family with them, Eph. ii. 14, 19. Believing Gentiles are not represented as forming a new church, but as *ingraffed into the stock* of the Old Testament church, Rom. xi. 17.

In the Old Testament, the worship of the New is often predicted under the names of ceremonial usages, as in Mal.

i. 11. *From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name and a pure offering.* In the viith chapter of the Revelation, the New Testament church is represented as consisting of the twelve tribes of Israel. And the entrance of the Gentiles into the New Testament church, and their attendance on its ordinances, are represented by the prophets as the gathering them to Jerusalem, Jer. iii. 17. Nothing less seems to be implied in these passages, than that, in substance, the same spiritual and evangelical worship, with the addition of typical rites, was truly offered to God under the Old Testament, which is now offered to him without those rites; and that persons under the New Testament, by their attendance on gospel ordinances, wherever administered according to the divine appointment, profess themselves members of the same church with the Israelites of old, who went up to worship at Jerusalem.

From what has been said concerning the unity of the Old and New Testament church, we learn, that to adhere stedfastly to the approved examples, under the Old Testament dispensation, of what the glorious Head of the church hath not abrogated in the form of religious worship, is, by no means, to Judaize; but, on the contrary, is indispensably necessary, as an evidence, that we truly belong to that church of Christ, which has been one and the same ever since the giving of the first promise; and as a suitable testimony against the present apostacy of the Jews from that church, to which they once did, and we now do belong.

From what has been advanced concerning the reality of the church's knowledge of the obedience and death of Christ, the futility is manifest, of what is so much insisted on by our opponents, namely, that church-members under the Old Testament, being ignorant of the obedience and death of Christ, as the medium or channel through which spiritual blessings are communicated, the psalms, which were suitable to their worship, cannot be suitable to ours. We have seen that there was no such invincible ignorance of that medium under the Old Testament, as they imagine; and therefore the conclusions drawn from it are not to be admitted.

Farther,

Farther, since the saving knowledge and faith of church-members had the same objects, and were of the same nature under both the Old and New Testament dispensations, it appears, that the psalms which have not spiritual and evangelical truth for the matter of them, were never calculated for the edification, nor suited to the worship of the church under either of these dispensations. Hence, when our opponents argue, that the psalms had not such truth for the matter of them, their argument would prove too much: It would prove that they were not fit for the worship even of the Old Testament church; and therefore it proves nothing.

When a writer, in opposition to the use of the scripture-songs in solemn worship, tells us, that "the Old Testament "church had no access to God, but through priests and sa-"crifices," he seems to assert a gross falsehood, namely, that the Old Testament church regarded the outward forms of the Levitical priesthood and sacrifices, as truly and properly the way of their access to God. The falsehood of this assertion is sufficiently evident from the consideration of the true nature of these outward observances, which were only shadows of good things to come, and signified the regard which the worshippers had to Christ as the only Priest and Sacrifice, by whom they could have access to and acceptance with God. Thus the typical nature of the priests and sacrifices of the Old Testament worshippers, leads to a conclusion just the reverse of what the writer now mentioned would draw from it; namely, that the Old Testament church had no access to God, nor communion with him, but through Jesus Christ. Priests, altars, sacrifices, belonged indeed to the instituted form of worship; and a stedfast adherence to them, while they were not abrogated, was indispensable duty: But it is no less absurd to say, that the Old Testament church had no access to God but through priests and sacrifices, than it would be to say, that the New Testament church has no access to God, but through bread and wine, because these are appointed to be used in the outward form of New Testament worship.

SECT. X. *Whether our continuing to ſing the Book of Pſalms infers our preference of the Old Teſtament Diſpenſation to the New.*

"SHALL any man," ſays a writer againſt the ſinging of the book of pſalms, "prevail upon us to return to the ſhadows "of good things to come, when we have the things them- "ſelves? Shall we light a lamp, when the ſun ſhineth in "his ſtrength? Having attained to the knowledge and full "underſtanding of manhood, ſhall we return to learn after "the elements and rudiments of children."

Anſwer. Declamation of this ſort is a mere *petitio principii*, or a begging of the queſtion. For there is no returning to the Old Teſtament diſpenſation in ſinging the book of pſalms, unleſs the ſinging of it be like circumciſion, ſacrificing, the annual obſervation of feaſts, abſtinence from blood and other food that was ceremonially unclean; that is, unleſs it be a ceremonial and abrogated rite, peculiar to the Old Teſtament diſpenſation. The practice of the ceremonial law, conſidered as a mean of coming to the underſtanding of the pſalms, may be compared to a child's manner of reading by ſpelling and dividing the ſyllables; while our coming to the underſtanding of them, by the ſuperior light ariſing from the canon of ſcripture now complete, is like a perſon's manner of reading who is conſiderably advanced in learning. Thus, the purifying rites preſcribed under the Old Teſtament, might aſſiſt a perſon in endeavouring to apprehend the import of ſuch an expreſſion as this, *Purge me with hyſſop*; but we have far better means of attaining that knowledge by the completion of the canon of ſcripture. Whatever childiſhneſs there might be in ſome of the means uſed by church-members under the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, for coming to the underſtanding of the pſalms, there never was nor is any thing childiſh in the pſalms themſelves, or in the ſinging of them.

But, ſays the objector, "of what advantage can the New "Teſtament ſcriptures be to us in our pſalms, hymns, and "ſpiritual ſongs, if it is unlawful for us to teach and ad- "moniſh from them? Of what uſe can a light be in a place "where we dare not introduce it? How can the typical "obſervances

" observances and figures in the book of psalms be compa-
" red with the light of the New Testament revelation,
" when every departure from the matter or form in which
" these psalms were written, implies a reflection on the Spi-
" rit, and a corruption of the worship of God ?"

Answer. The objector speaks as if the light of the New Testament were no otherwise of advantage to us, with respect to our psalms, hymns or spiritual songs, than as it may enable us to compose them. Unless he means to confine the use of this light, with regard to our hymns, to the making of them, he must allow it for our direction in singing them. Now if this light affords us direction in singing human compositures, why may it not do so in singing the scripture-psalms ? As the scriptures have been all dictated by the same Spirit, and form one harmonious whole ; so we are aided in our endeavours to understand one part of them by the understanding of other parts. Hence our understanding of the New Testament must be conducive to our understanding of the psalms. Indeed, New Testament light must heighten our esteem of the very form, as well as of the matter of the psalms ; causing us to discern a divine propriety in the form of discourse, in the metaphors, in the method chosen by the Holy Spirit. As the wing of a butterfly, and various other works of nature, seen through a microscope, appear far more delicate and finely proportioned, than they do to the naked eye ; while, on the contrary, the finest cambric and other works of art, when viewed by that curious instrument, appear coarse and deformed. So if the inspired forms of the psalms, and the most celebrated hymns of human composure, be both viewed in New Testament light, and considered with relation to their fitness for promoting the exercise of grace and spiritual affections, it will be found, that the latter will not bear a comparison with the former.

SECT. XI. *Whether the Scripture-songs be inadequate to the Knowledge and other Attainments of Church-members under the New Testament Dispensation.*

IT is farther objected, that " the language of the psalms
" in the Old Testament is not adequate to our views of the
" glorious things of the gospel. Do we not know more of
" God and of his works, both of nature and grace, than was

" revealed to the Jews? Do we not know more of the Fa-
" ther, Son, and Holy Spirit; and of their reſpective work
" in the ſalvation of ſinners? Do we not know more of the
" love of Chriſt in dying, the juſt for the unjuſt, that he
" might bring us to God? Are not our ſouls poſſeſſed with
" a variety of warm affections, when we contemplate our
" chief Beloved hanging on the croſs, with the load of all
" our ſins upon him, and giving up his life for rebels and
" enemies? And muſt we never ſing a new ſong for re-
" demption actually completed, nor otherwiſe than under
" the veil of ſacrificed bullocks, goats, &c.? We are enabled
" to look far into a future ſtate,—life and immortality are
" brought to light by the goſpel, &c."*

Anſwer. To admit this method of proving the warrantableneſs of ſinging human compoſures in ſolemn worſhip, is exceedingly dangerous. For this is the purport of it:—It ſeems to us highly proper, convenient and eligible; and therefore it is warrantable. How many rites of human invention will be introduced into religious worſhip, if plauſible reaſoning about the fitneſs of them be allowed, as the proper way of making out a warrant for their introduction? And on the other hand, how many divine ordinances, in which men ſee no fitneſs or uſefulneſs, will be laid aſide? It is a proteſtant principle, that no particular mean or way of worſhipping God is warrantable, which cannot be proved to have been divinely inſtituted, either by the expreſs words of ſcripture, or by conſequences neceſſarily deduced from them: Divine revelation being the only rule and ſtandard of all that religious worſhip which is acceptable to God. Without adhering to this principle, we cannot preſerve the ordinances of our holy religion pure or entire.

2. When the objector ſignifies, that the doctrines he mentions, are not contained in the pſalms, he ſeems to inſinuate, that they are not to be found in the Old Teſtament; for we cannot allow, that there is an article of evangelical doctrine in any other part of the Old Teſtament, which is neither expreſſed nor implied in the pſalms; theſe being a ſummary of what is contained in the other ſcriptures. Herein the objector contradicts a proteſtant principle, which uſed to be held

* An Examination, &c. pag. 104, 105.

held by orthodox divines againſt papiſts and Socinians, namely, the perfection of the Old Teſtament aſſerted by itſelf, Pſal. xix. 7. *The law of the Lord is perfect. Partes integrales*, ſays a very eſtimable writer,* *in doctrina legis et evangelii, non modo in univerſis Teſtamenti utriuſque libris, ſed etiam in Penteteucho Moſis; item in libris prophetarum abſque Novi Teſtamenti auctario deprehenduntur, utpote quo verbum ευγγελιον clarius, non perfectius, eſt redditum:* That is, "the "integral or conſtituent parts, conſiſting of the law and "the goſpel, are found not only in all the books of either "Teſtament; but even in the Penteteuch, or five books "of Moſes, alone; likewiſe in the books of the prophets, "without the addition of the New Teſtament; which ad- "dition is to be conſidered as rendering the written word "more clear, but not more perfect; that is, it adds no "new article to the ſubſtance either of the law or of the "goſpel."

3. The objection ſeems to be contrary to another proteſtant principle, namely, that not only the truths which are found in the expreſs words of any part of ſcripture, but thoſe alſo which are deducible therefrom by neceſſary conſequence, are juſtly reckoned to be taught in that part of ſcripture. Thus our Lord aſſures us, that the doctrine of the reſurrection of the dead was taught by the words which were ſpoken to Moſes out of the buſh, Luke xx. 37. Thus, many truths, beſides what are formally expreſſed in the words of a pſalm, are deducible from them by neceſſary conſequence. The death of Chriſt is a plain conſequence from theſe words, *Thou wilt not ſuffer thine Holy One to ſee corruption.* That Chriſt is the true God, follows from theſe words in the ſecond pſalm, *Kiſs the Son.* Admitting that whatever is thus deducible from the expreſs words of a pſalm, is taught in it, a perſon muſt ſurely have a conſummate knowledge of the force and connexion of every word in the book of pſalms, who can ſay with certainty, that ſuch an article of evangelical truth is not contained in any part of that book. Hence, it is evident, that they who complain of any penury of evangelical matter in the pſalms, or who

* Henricus Altingius, whoſe works, as Mr. Hervey obſerves, are more precious than gold.

who suppose there is more of it in some human compositures, only betray their inattention to the scriptures, and the perversion of their taste as to spiritual things.

4. Though the Old Testament church, in general, had not such outward means and advantages, as we now have; yet we are by no means thence to conclude, that the spiritual attainments of those particular eminent saints, whose exercises are recorded in the psalms, were inferior to ours. The lively exercises of faith represented in the xxiiid and many other psalms, the evangelical exercise of godly sorrow for sin as exemplified in the li*st*, the xxxiid, and cxxxth, the disinterested zeal for the welfare of the church of Christ expressed in the cxxxiid, and the cxxxviith, and the rich experience of spiritual profit by the word set forth in the cxixth, may well make the best christians among us blush to talk of the language of the psalms not being adequate to their attainments. Surely no matter can be fitter to be sung by the church in her solemn worship, than the infallible examples exhibited in the psalms, of solid piety and of the lively exercise of the true grace of God.

OBJECTION. "Our Lord declares, *For I say unto you, among those that are born of women there is not a greater than John the Baptist; but he that is least in the kingdom of God, is greater than he.* The kingdom of God, or, as Matthew, in a parallel passage, records it, the kingdom of heaven, is but another expression for the gospel dispensation; which is evident, both because our Lord almost always uses it in this sense, and because the following verse, in Matthew's gospel, confines it thereto. John Baptist neither wrought miracles nor predicted future events to any such degree, as many prophets that had risen before him; consequently, the only point in which he was superior to them all, was, his superior knowledge of gospel mysteries; and if the least in the kingdom of God, the weakest true christian, under the full light of the gospel, be greater than John, it must be in the same sense; that is to say, he is acquainted with many things in the plan of salvation, which were not revealed to John himself, and therefore such a christian knows more of these glorious things, than the greatest Old Testament prophet."

ANSWER.

ANSWER. It is necessary to distinguish between what was actually discerned in the inspired writings of the Old Testament, by church-members, and even by the prophets, under the Old dispensation, and what is discernible in those writings under the New. Hence, though the knowledge that church-members attain under the New Testament be superior to what was actually derived from the books of the Old Testament, by church-members under the Old dispensation, yet it will not follow, that their knowledge is superior to what may be derived from these books under the New. No superiority of knowledge, attainable in this life, can set church-members above the use of any part of the scriptures. Hence were it even supposable, that a christian knows more of the gospel than David, it will not follow, that he knows more than is contained in the psalms of David; because David was only the penman, while the Holy Spirit was the author of them; and gave them not only for his use, but for that of the church in all succeeding ages. The objector himself cannot consistently disapprove the distinction now made; since he gives it as the true meaning of 1 Pet. i. 12. that "it was revealed to the prophets, that "their predictions concerning the sufferings of Christ, and "the glory that should follow, were not for their learning; "and that, in uttering them, they were only ministering, "or performing services to the christian church." Upon this supposition it follows, that David, Asaph and others, in penning the psalms, ministered or performed a service, not so much to the Jewish, as to the christian church; and consequently, the psalms are more serviceable and suitable to the latter, than they were or could be to the former.

With respect to the text quoted, it may be observed, that the superiority of John the Baptist to the prophets, and other church-members under the Old dispensation, is not in respect of knowledge, holiness, and the like attainments; but merely in respect of office. In the foregoing verses, our Lord describes John as a prophet; and not only so, but as his harbinger, in whom the prophecy of Malachi, *Behold, I send my Messenger before thy face*, was fulfilled. In this respect, his ministry excelled that of all the prophets that had gone before him. While they spoke of Christ as not yet come, John, in his ministry, pointed him out, as already come.

come. Yet is the office of John inferior to that of the leaſt miniſter regularly called and ſent, according to the order of the New Teſtament church; the office of ſuch a miniſter being to declare, that *Chriſt hath finiſhed the work which the Father gave him to do;* that *he who was dead is now alive and lives for evermore, and hath the keys of hell and death.** But to ſay that a new Teſtament miniſter has a greater honour and privilege conferred upon him, in reſpect of ſome particular part of his office, than was conferred upon the greateſt prophet under the Old diſpenſation, is a quite different thing from ſaying, that the weakeſt true chriſtian under the New Teſtament diſpenſation has more knowledge of the plan of ſalvation than the greateſt prophet under the Old had, and it is more widely different ſtill from what the objector's purpoſe required him to ſay, namely, that the knowledge which the weakeſt true chriſtian has of goſpel-myſteries is ſo ſuperior to all that is contained in the inſpired writings of the prophets, as to render the uſe of them, and particularly the ſinging of the pſalms, a poor, mean, low thing, to which it does not become him to ſtoop.

The truth is, New Teſtament light is derived not only from the books of the New Teſtament, but alſo from the better underſtanding and fuller uſe which may now be had of the books of the Old Teſtament; of the book of pſalms as

* If it be objected to the ſenſe here given of the text, that, while we underſtand the word *greater* as reſpecting a public office, the word *leaſt* is conſidered as reſpecting perſonal qualifications; it may be anſwered, that in ſimilar phraſes it is neceſſary to conſider the words which are oppoſed to one another as reſpecting different things: Thus the apoſtle ſays of himſelf, and his fellow-labourers in the work of the goſpel, *That they were poor, yet making many rich*, 2 Cor. vi. 10.; that is, poor as to the things of this world, and yet inſtruments in Chriſt's hand of making many rich in faith, rich towards God, and in good works. Some judicious commentators, by *the leaſt*, or, as it may be rendered, *the leſſer*, or *younger*, *in the kingdom of God*, (as one of the apoſtles is called, *James the leſs*, Mark xv. 40. that is, *the younger*, in reſpect of James the ſon of Zebedee) underſtand Chriſt himſelf, who might be ſo called, becauſe he was younger, and later in entering upon his public miniſtry than John. *See Witſius Oecon. Fœd. cap. xiii. lib. iv.*

as well as of any other. Hence we may conclude, that New Testament light, being true and genuine, can have no tendency to lessen, but rather to increase the use of the psalms in the reading and singing of them.

SECT. XII. *Whether our having the Scripture-songs for our forms of Psalmody, excludes the due Commemoration of the Benefits God hath bestowed on his Church, since the coming of Christ, from a place in our praises.*

OBJECTION. " Shall christians, in all their songs of " praise, be silent respecting the beneficent acts of the bless- " sed Jesus? Shall they say nothing of his opening the eyes " of the blind, of his unstopping the ears of the deaf, of his " causing the lame to leap as the hart, and the tongue of " the dumb to sing, of his healing obstinate diseases by a " touch or a word, of his walking on the water, command- " ing the winds and waves, raising the dead to life, feeding " thousands with a few loaves and fishes, turning water " into wine, bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, " spoiling principalities and powers, and triumphing over " them, and ascending into heaven as our forerunner, of " his calling the Gentiles, &c.?"

ANSWER. The psalms are not silent as to these particulars. We sing the praises of Christ's miracles in such words as these, Psal. lxxii. 18. *Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who alone doth wondrous things*, and cxlvi. 7, 8. *The Lord giveth food to the hungry: The Lord looseth the prisoners: The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind: The Lord raiseth the bowed down.* Of his incarnation, Psal. xl. 6. *Mine ears hast thou opened;* compared with Heb. x. 5. *A body hast thou prepared me.* Of his sufferings, wherein he bore our iniquities, in the lxixth and xxiid psalms. Of his glorious exaltation, in Psal. cxviii. 22. *The stone which the builders rejected is become the head-stone of the corner.* Of him in respect of his divine nature, Psal. ii. 7. *The Lord said unto me, Thou art my Son: This day I have begotten thee:* cx. 1. *The Lord said unto my Lord, &c.* Of him in respect of his human nature, Psal. xxii. 9. *Thou art he who took me out of the womb: Thou didst make me hope when I was on my mother's breasts. I was cast upon thee from the womb. I am poured*

poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint, &c. Of his prieſtly office, Pſal. cx. 4. *Thou art a prieſt for ever after the order of Melchiſedec.* Of his prophetical office, Pſal. xxii. 22. *I will declare thy name unto my brethren: In the midſt of the congregation will I praiſe thee.* Of his kingly office, Pſal. ii. 6. *Yet have I ſet my king upon my holy hill of Zion.* Of his bleſſed work in the calling of the Gentiles, Pſal. xcviii. 23. *The Lord hath made known his ſalvation: his righteouſneſs hath he openly ſhewn in the ſight of the heathen. All the ends of the earth have ſeen the ſalvation of our God.* Of the irreſiſtible power which he diſplays in the converſion of ſinners, Pſal. cx. 3. *Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power*: xlv. 3. *Gird thy ſword upon thy thigh, O moſt Mighty, with thy glory and thy majeſty.* Of the riches of his grace in our juſtification, Pſal. xxxii. 1, 2. *Bleſſed is the man whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe ſin is covered, and to whom the Lord imputeth no iniquity;* and in our ſanctification, Pſal. xxiii. 3. *He reſtoreth my ſoul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteouſneſs for his name's ſake.* Theſe few, out of a great many inſtances, may ſerve to ſhew how far we are, in ſinging the pſalms, from being ſilent with regard to the beneficent acts of the Lord Jeſus.

Beſides, it is to be obſerved, as a principal conſideration here, that there is no pious exerciſe of the ſoul, to which the Lord is calling any, that there is not a form of words, in one or other of the pſalms, proper to promote and expreſs. For this purpoſe it is not neceſſary, that the particular explications of doctrines, which we have in other places of ſcripture, or formal narratives of facts, which may be the immediate occaſion of our preſent exerciſe, ſhould be introduced into our ſpiritul ſongs: It is enough that the words thereof are ſo applicable to the occaſion, as to expreſs the ſentiments of admiration, gratitude and praiſe, which ought then to poſſeſs our minds.

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SECT. XIII. *Whether the Language of Prophecy be necessarily obscure and unintelligible before the Accomplishment of it; and whether it be a sufficient Objection against our Singing the Psalms, that they were written before many of those glorious Events, which are among the principal Subjects of our Praise, had taken place.*

IN speaking against the singing of the psalms in our solemn worship, strange things have been thrown out concerning the obscurity of Old Testament predictions. "Prophecy," it has been said, "is involved in such obscurity, "that it cannot be understood but by the accomplishment. "Prophecy MUST be obscure, because the moral agency of "man is concerned in bringing to pass the predicted events. "If the prediction was so clear as to give an adequate view "of the subject, either the event would be frustrated, or the "moral agency of man must be over-ruled so as to destroy "his accountableness."

Answer. The far greater part of the psalms being representations of the exercise of the grace of God in the souls of his people, are not affected by the objection. Nor has it any force against the singing of those parts of them respecting Christ and his church, which may be considered as prophetic, now when they are fulfilled; since it is allowed, that the fulfilment may take away the obscurity of prophecy. Nor is the doctrine here taught concerning the obscurity of prophecy, to be admitted without limitation. Some prophecies are more plain; as that in 1 Kings xiii. 4. about Josiah's overthrow of the altar at Bethel, and that about the term of the Babylonish captivity, in Jer. xxv. 11, 12. and xxix. 10. Nor is the plainness of such prophecies inconsistent with the free agency of those who are instrumental in fulfilling them, as is manifest from the examples of the prophecies concerning Hazael's cruelties, 2 Kings viii. 12. concerning the betraying of Christ, John xiii. 21. concerning Peter's denial of him, Luke xxii. 34. and of many others. Some prophecies are more obscure, as the prophecy of Christ concerning his death and resurrection, in John ii. 19. This obscurity is ordered for the incitement of the godly to the diligent study of the scriptures, and to earnest prayer for that

ſpiritual illumination which is neceſſary to the underſtanding of prophecy, as it is indeed for the underſtanding of the other parts of ſcripture, Dan. xii 10. *None of the wicked ſhall underſtand; but the wiſe ſhall underſtand.* Though the obſcurity of many prophecies be well ordered, as for other purpoſes, ſo for that of depriving men of all pretence for excuſing ſinful actions, as if their rational liberty were infringed by ſuch actions being foretold; yet it does not follow, that, if ſuch a prophecy had been clear, the excuſe would have been juſt; becauſe no divine prophecy as ſuch, was ever delivered to men as the rule of duty. And it is evident that men, in performing actions that were moſt clearly foretold, have acted as freely, that is, as much according to their diſpoſition and choice, as in performing any other. For example, what could be more clearly foretold than the betraying of Chriſt by Judas, and the denial of him by Peter? Yet it does not appear that the prediction, in either of theſe caſes, deſtroyed, or even leſſened the moral agency, or the accountableneſs of the actors?

The opinion, that divine prophecy in general is ſo obſcure as to be unintelligible till it be accompliſhed, ſeems to be inconſiſtent with the nature of prophecy, as it is a revelation or foreſhewing of things to come. For a future event cannot be ſaid to be foreſhewn, by a ſpeech which cannot be underſtood before the event takes place. Surely the ſaints, before the coming of Chriſt, were inſtructed by the prophecies of him: But how could they be ſo, if theſe prophecies could not be underſtood but by the accompliſhment? When Micaiah foretold that Ahab ſhould go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead, could this not be underſtood but by the accompliſhment? When our Lord ſaid to his diſciples, Peter and John, *Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there ſhall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water;* muſt we allow, that the diſciples could not underſtand theſe words, till they actually met the man with the pitcher? The truth is, divine prophecy may be obſcure, but is not always or neceſſarily ſo; and there is reaſon to believe, that it is never ſo in ſuch a degree that it cannot be underſtood but by the accompliſhment. Even the light thrown upon a prophecy by the event, ſhews how that prophecy might have been underſtood before the event, by directing the attention to

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ſome circumſtance which had been overlooked. All explications of divine prophecy, which imply, that it could not be underſtood without the exiſtence of ſomething which did not exiſt when it was delivered, may, on that account, be rejected. It is well known, that many divine prophecies are full of alluſions to perſons, places, cuſtoms and facts, which were familiarly known at the time when they were delivered. Hence it is not improbable, that ſome of them might be better underſtood at the time of their delivery, than they were afterward. The accompliſhment of a divine prophecy is not ſuch a correſpondence of ſomething with the tenor of it, as ſuperſtitious people are continually diſcovering between their dreams and this and the other occurrence: It is ſomething which might have been foreſeen before it took place, by the light of that prophecy. Thus, the aſcendency, which Rome antichriſtian was to gain over the kings of the earth, might have been underſtood from the xviith chapter of the Revelation, compared with the character of the man of ſin, drawn in the 2d epiſtle to the Theſſalonians, even at the time of John's writing the Revelation.*

On the whole, we cannot conclude, a *priore*, that the pſalms deſcribing Chriſt's humiliation and exaltation are obſcure,

* With reſpect to the expreſſion concerning the prophets in 1 Pet. i. 12. *Not unto themſelves, but to us they did miniſter*, it is well known, that the word *not*, is often taken eliptically, for *not only*, or *not chiefly*, as in Gen. xxxii. 28. 1 Sam. viii. 7. Acts v. 4. So here it is put for not only, or chiefly to themſelves, &c. The ſame apoſtle in Acts ii. 30, 31. repreſents David as knowing the reſurrection of Chriſt; which implies, that he had the knowledge of his death and of the glory which was to follow. The prophets knew, that the word which they were directed to deliver, would be a light to the church, not only in their own times, but in all ſucceeding ages; a light which would continue to grow brighter unto the end of time. The author of an Examination, &c. pag. 97. ſays, "The predictions uttered by the Old Teſta-" ment prophets, were ſo far from being intelligible, that the pro-" phets themſelves were engaged in a ſcrutiny and diligent ſearch " into them." One ſhould think it would have been more natural to have ſaid, that judging their own prophecies to be intelligible, they were engaged in a diligent ſearch into the import of them.

obſcure, becauſe they are prophetical; ſince prophecy may be plain as well as obſcure.

OBJECTION. In ſinging the Old Teſtament pſalms, we ſing of Chriſt as not yet come; of his humiliation and exaltation, and the conſequences thereof, as if they had not yet taken place.

ANSWER. We are here to remember, what has been already proved, that it is not neceſſary, as in prayer, to conſider all the words which we ſing as our own words, and as applicable to our preſent ſituation; and that we are to be directed to the right underſtanding and application of the pſalms which we ſing, by comparing them with the New Teſtament and other parts of ſcripture. On this principle, it is plain, that we cannot be ſuitably exerciſed in ſinging ſuch words as theſe, *Then ſaid I, Lo I come: Thou haſt aſcended on high: The Lord ſaid unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand*, without praiſing and bleſſing God for Chriſt as having already come, as having already aſcended, and ſitten down on the right hand of the Majeſty on high.

It is obvious, that in theſe and the like expreſſions, Chriſt is ſpoken of as already come: It may be ſaid, that the figurative ſtyle of the prophets is here uſed, which often puts the paſt for the future. But why ſhould we not allow, that the Holy Spirit, who dictated the pſalms, as he did the other ſcriptures, for all ſucceeding generations, made choice, in theſe inſtances, of that figurative manner of ſpeaking, with a view to the time when theſe expreſſions were to be juſtly uſed, and applied properly, or as plain language?

In the next place, we obſerve, that the events, ſalutary to the church, which have taken place ſince the end of the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, are chiefly our Lord's obedience unto death, and deliverances which are fruits of it. With reſpect to his obedience unto death, faith, even under the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, viewed it as preſent in the word of grace and promiſe; and, in regard that the ſaints were then enjoying the fruits of it, faith viewed it, in its virtue and efficacy, as if it had been already paſt. If this be duly conſidered, it will not be ſurprizing, that we ſhould ſing of the death of Chriſt in the ſame words wherein the Old Teſtament church ſung of it. With reſpect to deliverances, which are fruits of the death of Chriſt, ours and theirs are

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so much alike, that they may well be celebrated in the same songs. The deliverance which believers then obtained from the law as a covenant of works, from sin, satan, the world and death, is materially the same with what they now obtain; so that the same songs of praise for the personal deliverances of believers, may well be continued in our solemn worship. And as God's relation to the church in general, and his care of it, are the same under both dispensations; so the signal appearances, which he made for his church under the Old dispensation, are recorded as patterns and pledges of the appearances which he will make for it under the New; Isa. li. 9. *Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon?* Mich. vii. 15. *According to the days of the coming out of the land of Egypt, will I shew unto him marvellous things.* There being such a similarity between the appearances of God for the church under the Old dispensation, and his appearances for it under the New, why should it be thought strange, that we should be appointed to use the same psalms in praising him for the latter that had been used in praising him for the former? Hence, in the xvth chapter of the Revelation, the New Testament church, upon occasion of the outpouring of the vials upon antichrist, is represented as singing, in the language of the Old Testament psalms, the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb, saying, *Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: For all nations shall come and worship before thee: For thy judgments are made manifest.* Psal. lxxxvi. 9. cxlv. 17.

Sect. XIV. *Whether we exclude the Gospel from our Solemn Praises by the Use of the Scripture-songs.*

Objection. "Those who sing David's psalms, dis-
"honour that gospel in which they profess to glory, by
"leaving it entirely out, in their songs of praise, where
"gratitude for it should always constitute a principal part.
"Shall the gospel have no share in our songs of praise and
"gratitude to God?"

ANSWER. The word gospel, like many others in scripture, is taken in different senses. If any one should insist, that the New Testament dispensation is sometimes called the gospel, on account of the more clear exhibition of the gospel, the canon of scripture being now complete; it would not be necessary to oppose him; provided he allow, that the gospel, strictly taken, which signifies good news of pardon and salvation, given freely to poor sinners for the sake of Christ Jesus, is the common doctrine of the whole bible. The doctrine of the Old Testament gets this name as well as that of the New: Gal. iii. 8. *The scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham. In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.* Heb. iv. 2. *Unto us was the gospel preached as well as unto them.* 1 Pet. iv. 6. *The gospel was preached to them that are dead.* It seems to be called the *everlasting gospel*, because it has been the same gospel ever since the giving of the first promise on the back of the fall, and will continue the same to the end of time. The law and the gospel, properly so called, are not exhibited in separate books of scripture; but both run through the whole of it; the one being taught in subservience to the other. So Mr. Erskine justly says:

> When we the sacred record view,
> Or divine Test'ments Old and New;
> The matter in most pages fix'd,
> Is law and gospel intermix'd.

To the gospel belong all such passages in the psalms as these already quoted, concerning the person and offices of Christ; all the declarations of the Lord's mercy and forgiveness, Psal. lxxxvi. 15. *Thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, long suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.* cxxx. 4. *But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.* All such declarations of the Lord's mercy exercised towards poor sinners, as that in Psal. cvi. 8. *Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known.* Most of the arguments with which the psalmist enforces his petitions, Psal. xxv. 7, 11. *According to thy mercy remember me for thy goodness sake, O Lord. For thy name's sake pardon mine iniquity; for it is great.* cxix. 58. *Be merciful unto me according to thy word.* All such

such promises as these in Psal. xxii. 27, 28, 29, 30, 31. *All ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord, &c.* and in Psal. lxxxix. 4, 21, 37. All the representations of the spiritual blessings which believers partake of in this life. Psal. ciii. 2, 3, 4. *Bless the Lord, O my soul; and be not forgetful of his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies.* Or in the life to come, Psal. xvii. 15. *As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.* All intimations of the ground of faith, or confidence in the Lord's name, Psal. xxxvi 17. *How excellent is thy loving kindness! therefore do the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.* lxv. 5. *Thou art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are a-far off upon the sea.* All the examples of the exercise of faith, Psal. cxlii. 5. *I cried unto thee, O Lord, I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.* Though there is no verbal mention of Christ in many of the psalms; yet he is still to be understood as the sure foundation on which the psalmist proceeded in all his dealings with God, in all his spiritual exercises; as is evident from his disclaiming all pretensions to any righteousness of his own, upon the footing of which he could stand before God, Psal. cxxx. 3. cxliii. 2. from his resolution to make mention of the divine righteousness only, Psal. lxxi. 16. In the psalms, the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, are, for the most part, rather supposed, than particularly explained; and the exercises of godly fear, love to God and his ways, zeal for his declarative glory, and other graces, arising from the faith of those doctrines, are exemplified.

These are some instances of the gospel, with which the psalms are richly furnished. Well may they be called gospel psalms, hymns and songs.

To represent church-members as not singing the gospel, when they sing the psalms of David, is just as reasonable, as it would be to say, that a person does not read the gospel, when he reads the epistles of James, John and Jude; because the word *gospel* is not to be found in any of them.

It recommends the practice of singing the book of psalms, that hereby we acknowledge that the church of God was, under

under the Old diſpenſation, and is now, edified by the ſame goſpel,

> Which from the firſt has ſhone on ages paſt,
> Enlights the preſent, and ſhall warm the laſt.

SECT. XV. *Whether it be the caſe, that, in Singing the Pſalms of David, no diſtinct regard is expreſſed to the Three Perſons of the Godhead.*

THE oppoſers of the ſinging of the ſcripture-ſongs, deny that, in ſinging the ſcripture-ſongs, we expreſs a diſtinct regard to the Perſons of the Godhead.

With how little reaſon they do ſo, will appear from the following obſervations:

In the firſt place, if the ſcripture-forms of pſalmody expreſſed no diſtinct regard to the Perſons of the Godhead, then they would have been improper even under the Old Teſtament diſpenſation; for then, as well as now, the doctrine of the Trinity was revealed and believed. Here we may not overlook a dangerous opinion, advanced in oppoſition to the ſcripture-forms of pſalmody, in the following words: "If you aſk why no ſuch diſtinct wor-"ſhip was paid to Jeſus Chriſt under the Old Teſtament? "The anſwer is eaſy. It is becauſe God is chiefly praiſed "there for the works of creation and providence, in which "the ſeveral Perſons of the Trinity were jointly concern-"ed, and no ſpecial and diſtinct manifeſtation being made "of their glory, there was no neceſſity of any diſtinct "mention of them." *

In oppoſition to theſe words we obſerve, 1. That a Three One God is the only true God: Any worſhip, therefore, which is not a worſhip of the Three-One God is idolatry; or the worſhip of that which is not the true God; the worſhip of an idol. 2. That God cannot be truly worſhipped by fallen man, without the faith of a Mediator. But that faith cannot be without the knowledge and belief of the Three Perſons in the unity of the Godhead. If theſe Three Perſons be known and believed, they muſt be regarded and acknowledged in divine worſhip. And, therefore,

* A Diſcourſe on Pſalmody, by Mr. Lata, pag. 107.

fore, they must have been so regarded and acknowledged by true and acceptable worshippers of God under the Old, as well as the New dispensation. 3. That the doctrine of the Trinity is taught in the Old Testament. This has been often shewn in the writings of orthodox divines, against the Jews, the Arians and Socinians. A plurality of Persons in the Divine Essence is plainly intimated in the account of man's creation, Gen. i. 26. *And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness.* Some have supposed, that God here speaks improperly, after the manner of kings and princes; while there is no evidence of any such manner being in use, when Moses wrote: Nor indeed can any tolerable account be given of this expression without allowing a plurality of Persons in the Godhead. God frequently speaks of himself in this manner; Gen. iii. 22. *And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us.* Gen. xi. 6, 7. *And the Lord said, Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language.* Isai. vi. 8. *And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send? and who shall go for us?*

It has been generally allowed among christians, that the Three Persons in the unity of the Divine Essence, are intimated in the threefold repetition of the Divine name, in the sacerdotal benediction recorded in Numb. vi. 24, 25, 26. *The Lord bless thee, and keep thee. The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.* The name Jehovah, as Mr. Henry observes, is here three times repeated, and each of them with a different accent in the original. The Jews themselves think there is some mystery in this: And certainly it can be no other than this, to denote Three distinct Persons, each of which is Jehovah, answerably to the apostolical benediction, in 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

But there are various other texts in the Old Testament, in which the doctrine of a Trinity is still more clearly held forth: Isai. lxiii. 7, 9, 10. *I will mention the loving kindness of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness towards the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them. In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence saved them: In his love, and in his pity, he redeemed them; and he bare and carried them all the days of old. But they rebelled*

belled and vexed his Holy Spirit. Hence Three Divine Perſons are plainly mentioned: The firſt is, *the Lord*, whoſe great goodneſs to the houſe of Iſrael is ſpoken of: The ſecond is *the Angel of his face or preſence:* This is the uncreated Angel of the covenant, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, Exod. xxiii. 20, 21. Mal. iii. 1. The third is *the Holy Spirit;* who is repreſented as grieved and vexed, agreeably to the expreſſion of the apoſtle, Eph. iv. 32. Another paſſage in which we meet with this doctrine, is Iſai. lxi. 1, 2. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, becauſe the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek; he hath ſent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the priſon to them that are bound.* Here alſo are Three Divine Perſons plainly revealed: The perſon ſpeaking, namely, *the Meſſiah*, who is repreſented as doing what none can do who is not truly God; as binding up the broken hearted, proclaiming liberty to the captives, the opening of the priſon to thoſe that are bound: Another perſon, who is evidently diſtinguiſhed from the Meſſiah, as anointing and ſending the Meſſiah, namely, *the Father;* and a third perſon, *the Spirit of the Lord God*, who is ſaid to be upon the Meſſiah; for *God giveth not the Spirit by meaſure unto him.* To the ſame purpoſe is that which we have in Iſai. xlviii. 16. *And now the Lord God and his Spirit hath ſent*, or, rather, as it ought to be rendered, *the Lord God hath ſent me and his Spirit.* Alſo Hag. ii. 4, 5. *I am with you, ſaith the Lord of hoſts. With the Word that I covenanted with you, when ye came out of Egypt, and my Spirit remaining among you unto this day.* By *the Word*, which the Lord covenanted or promiſed to be with them, we are to underſtand the uncreated Angel of the covenant. See Exod. xxiii. 20, 21.

Theſe are a few (out of many) paſſages of the Old Teſtament, in which the doctrine of the Trinity is taught. The proofs that were formerly adduced, of the knowledge which the Old Teſtament church had of Chriſt, may all be added to this purpoſe; becauſe the knowledge of the Trinity is neceſſarily ſuppoſed in the knowledge of Chriſt.

The following words of the objector being ſo remarkable for inaccuracy, confuſion and error, require ſome animadverſion. "God is chiefly praiſed in the Old Teſtament for "the works of creation and providence, in which the ſeveral

" ral Persons of the Godhead were jointly concerned, and " and no special or distinct manifestation being made of " their glory, there was no necessity of any distinct mention " of them."

In the first place, it is not true, that God is chiefly praised for the works of creation and providence in the Old Testament: 1. Because our Lord represents it as the principal scope of the Old Testament scriptures to testify of him, John v. 39. *Search the scriptures—they are they which testify of me:* It was the great scope of the law and prophets to set forth his justifying righteousness, Rom. iii. 21. *Now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.* 2. Because God is chiefly praised in the Old Testament as the God of salvation: But he is not known to be the God of salvation by the works of creation and providence. 3. Because God is chiefly praised in the Old Testament for his peculiar love to the church, and for the peculiar deliverances thereof. Hence that remarkable apostrophe, Isai. xliv. 23. *Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it; shout ye lower parts of the earth: Break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein; for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.* The raising up of Zion, however much overlooked by worldly wisdom, is represented as surpassing the works of creation and common providence, and as above them in the climax of the divine praises; as in the following words: *Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself: That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish; that confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof.*

In the next place, it is very incautious and improper to represent it as peculiar to the works of creation and providence, " that the several Persons of the Godhead were joint- " ly concerned in them;" as if there were some of the divine works in which the Three Persons are not joinly concerned.

Tho'

Tho' there is an order of working among the Persons of the Godhead, according to the order of subsistence in the Godhead, yet they all perfectly concur in every divine operation *ad extra.** What cometh from one, cometh from all, John v. 2. *The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do. For what things soever he doth, these also doth the Son likewise.* It is true, that distinct parts are ascribed to these Persons in the work of redemption; yet they are all jointly concerned or concur in each of these parts. There can be no consideration of them as acting separately *ad extra*, consistent with the absolute unity and simplicity of the Divine Being.

Farther, we are told concerning the Persons of the Godhead, that there was "no distinct manifestation made of "their glory." What can be meant by a distinct manifestation of the glory of these Persons? Surely they are not distinguished in respect of glory; the glory of one is the glory of all; the glory of a Three-One God. With respect to the assertion, that "there is no distinct mention of them in the Old "Testament," the falsehood of it appears from what has been already said: And it will farther appear from

The last thing we have to observe on this section, namely, that the doctrine of the Trinity is clearly set forth even in the scripture-songs. Thus with respect to Psal. xxxiii. 6. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth;* several judicious and orthodox divines have observed, that here we have distinct mention of Three Persons concurring in the work of creation, Jehovah the Father—the Word of the Lord, that is, his Personal Word, the eternal Son—and the Breath of his mouth, or the Holy Spirit, called in Job xxxiii. 4. *The Breath of the Almighty.* We have the personal properties of the first and second Persons of the Godhead pointed out in the iid psalm, *The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son:* This day, or from eternity, *have I begotten thee.* For it

* An act of God *ad extra*, is an act which has something without God, some creature for its object, such as creation; in opposition to his acts *ad intra*, which are immanent and eternal, considered as terminating within the Godhead, as the eternal generation of the Son.

it is the personal property of the Father, eternally to beget the Son; and that of the Son to be eternally begotten of the Father. Again, these persons are distinctly represented as parties contracting in the covenant of grace; one of them undertaking a glorious work; on condition of which another makes many great and precious promises. So, in the xlth psalm, the Son is brought in saying to the Father, *Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me: I delight to do thy will, O my God: Thy law is within my heart.* In the lxxxixth psalm, we have many promises of the Father to Christ, *I have made a covenant with my chosen One. Thy seed will I establish for ever, &c.* The several parts which are ascribed to these persons in the work of our redemption are distinctly pointed out. Thus, the part of the Father, in investing the Son with his mediatorial office, is plainly declared, Psal. ii. 6. *Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.* xl. 6. *Mine ear hast thou opened.* cx. 4. *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec.* The part of Christ in purchasing redemption, is represented in the account we have of his sufferings in the xxiid and lxixth psalms. The part of the Holy Spirit in the application of the purchased redemption, is intimated in such expressions as these: Psal. li. 11, 12. *Take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Uphold me with thy free Spirit.* Psal. cxliii. 10. *Teach me to do thy will: For thou art my God: Thy Spirit is good: Lead me to the land of uprightness.* The Son and the Spirit are distinctly represented as entitled to the same worship with the Father; being possessed of the same infinite perfections. Psal. ii. 12. *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.* Psal. cxxxix. 7. *Whether shall I go from thy Spirit, whether shall I flee from thy presence?**

SECT.

* In this, and some preceding sections, we have an easy answer to the queries, which the author of the Discourse on Psalmody, so often repeats—"If christians were to be restricted in their psalms, "hymns and spiritual songs, to any part of the Old Testament, how "comes the apostle, in the beginning and progress of his epistle to "the Colossians, to direct them to very different grounds of praise "and thanksgiving to God? Are no songs to be sung for the "grace

SECT. XVI. *Of the Obscurity of the Psalms.*

OBJECTION "Though it should be allowed, that these "evangelical truths are, in some degree, revealed in the "Old Testament, yet the whole language and ordinances of "the Old Testament are in themselves obscure, and were in- "tended to veil the subject. It must be very unsuitable, not to "say more, to confine ourselves to these forms, and to this "language, now when all the glorious things which they "but darkly and imperfectly represented are revealed in so "full, so clear, and so explicit a manner, that he may run "who reads; and worship not in the letter, but in the spirit. "Must we never celebrate these glorious things in songs of "praise, but in language that is not adequate to our know- "ledge or views? Nor must it be forgotten, that such con- "finement will be injurious to our souls. In singing of "burnt-offerings, bullocks, rams, goats, feasts, and the like, "we cannot avoid thinking of these ordinances and services. "Nay, the idea of them will first strike our minds, and we "may not get rid of them so soon as we would with."

ANSWER. If by the obscurity of the psalms, through the mention of the Old Testament observances, and by the whole language of the Old Testament being intended to veil the subject, be meant that the psalms, literally translated, are not adapted to convey instruction, concerning the way of salvation through the obedience and sufferings of our Redeemer, to the hearers of the word; we deny that the Old Testament, and particularly the psalms, are at all chargeable with such obscurity. And herein we tread in the steps of our protestant ancestors, and make use of their arguments for the perspicuity of the holy scriptures, against the church of Rome.

"grace that is come to us by the incarnation, life, death, and "resurrection of David's Lord? Are we never to address a song "of praise to him who made us kings and priests unto God?" &c. For, in these sections it is shewn, that we cannot sing the psalms without praising and blessing God for all the parts of our salvation, according to what is ascribed distinctly to each of the persons of the Godhead, and that the same blessings are the grounds of praise and thanksgiving in the psalms, as under the New Testament.

Rome. If it be said that the papists charged obscurity upon the whole scriptures; we answer, that some of them used to speak much in the manner of those who now oppose the singing of the scripture-songs. Gordon, a Jesuit quoted by Glassius, asserts, "that the causes of ambiguity which he enumerates, have place in the style of the Old Testament only, and acknowledges, that the style of the New Testament is plain, perspicuous and free from ambiguity." And as it is manifest, that no book of the Old Testament is plainer, or better adapted to the general use and edification of church-members, than the book of psalms; the charge of obscurity brought against it, must be equally against every other book of the Old Testament. Protestants have usually refuted the papists by shewing, that the scripture asserts its own perspicuity. Now it is evident, that the texts which they quote to this purpose, have a direct and immediate respect to the books of the Old Testament, many of them being from the Old Testament itself; such as Deut. xxx. 11. *For this commandment which I command thee this day is not hidden from thee,* (from thy understanding) *neither is it far from thee,* or unsuitable to thy capacity; for so the phrase, as Glassius tell us, is used by the Hebrew writers. To the same purpose is Prov. vi. 20. 23. where Solomon, in ver. 20, 21. exhorts to the study of the divine word; and to move us thereto, gives a most engaging representation of what it is found to be in the experience of such as obtain a saving knowledge of it, ver. 22. And then, lest any should complain of obscurity, adds, *For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light,* ver. 23. Psal. cxix. 105, 130. *Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path. The entrance of thy word giveth light: It giveth understanding unto the simple.* Psal. xix. 7, 8. *The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.* Even the passages produced out of the New Testament for the vindication of the perspicuity of the scriptures, have a direct reference to those of the Old Testament; such as, 2 Pet. i. 19. *We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, till the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.* So long as we are in this world, which is, in the esteem of true christians,

tians, a dark, and, as the Greek word here signifies, a polluted place, (the Lord having said to them concerning it, *This is not your rest, because it is polluted*) and so long as any of the darkness and filthiness of it remains with us, we must make use of the prophetic word, that is, of the Old Testament as well as the New; attending to it, as to a light that gives sure and infallible direction, till the day of glory dawn; till φωσφορος, that which bringeth light, arise in the perfection of heaven, or of that manifestation of the bright and morning Star, which is already begun in our hearts. Again, the argument for the perspicuity of the scripture, arising from the declared end for which it was written, concludes strongly for the perspicuity of the psalms, Rom. xv. 4. *For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.* The scripture is given to make the simple wise unto salvation, 2 Tim. iii. 15. Our opponents object the Hebrew idioms and figurative expressions. The papists objected the same things against the perspicuity of the scriptures. Protestant divines, and we, with them, answer, that there is no Hebraisms but what may easily be understood by a person that is daily exercised, as christians ought to be, in the attentive reading of the scriptures; and that as to figurative expressions, they are used not to obscure divine things, but to express them more emphatically and forcibly.* The papists asked, why we explain the scriptures? and our opponents, on the same account, why we explain the psalms? The answer that used to be given by protestants is sufficient in the present case, namely, that the perspicuity of the scripture is such as does not at all supercede the necessity of the inward illumination of the Spirit, or of interpretation and other means of promoting our attention to the scripture, and our improvement of its perspicuity. Nor will it avail our opponents to say, the papists were against the *reading* of the scriptures; whereas the question at present

* Henricus Altingius observes, (in answer to the papists,) Hebraismos frequenti et attenta lectione scripturæ facile observari, et tropos adhiberi non ad obscurandas res divinas, sed ad eas tum significantius exprimendas, tum efficacius persuadendas *Loc. Commun. Part 2d.*

present is only about *singing*. For it is evident, that the necessary perspicuity of the psalms is denied, when they are represented as so obscure, that church-members cannot be supposed ordinarily to attain such an understanding of them, as is necessary for the purpose of singing them to edification. We allow, that some places of scripture are more difficult than others; and that, even in the psalms, there are texts that may be said to be such. Yet the book of psalms, compared with the other books of scripture, must rather be ranked among the more plain, than among the more difficult. This must be evident to one that compares the Psalms with Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon, Ezekiel, Daniel, and other books. Besides, what was obscure in the psalms to church-members under the Old dispensation, is, in a great measure, become plain, and easy to us, by our having the complete canon of scripture, and through the more abundant supply of the Spirit of Christ.

The objector represents the allusions in the psalms to Old Testament ordinances as tending to distract the minds of worshippers. But this representation is contrary to common experience, with respect to the effect of figurative language.

These words of the psalmist, *I will go into thy house with burnt-offerings*, being understood as a profession of faith and a purpose of obedience, no more distract the mind with the thought of Old Testament ordinances and services, than these words of the apostle to the Romans, *I beseech you brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God.* Nor are we more distracted by the figurative expression in either of these passages, than we are by that in the words of our Lord, *My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.* How ridiculous would it be to complain of the figurative expression here used in this manner! That when we read it, we cannot avoid thinking of bread; and that we cannot get rid of the thought of bread as soon as we could wish.

But if it be said, that, in the expressions quoted from the psalms, the principal object is not revealed; and, while we have the accessory only, it cannot be instructive: We must still answer, that, upon this supposition, such expressions were unprofitable to church-members even under the Old

Teſtament: For neither the practice of the ceremonial law, nor references to it in the pſalms, could be of any uſe to the ſouls of men, but as they were means of directing their faith and hope to the principal object, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. But that the principal object, which was ultimately deſigned, and which alone could ever afford ſaving or ſpiritual inſtruction, was by no means kept out of view, is evident from what has been ſaid concerning the knowledge which the Old Teſtament church had of Chriſt, and of the things of Chriſt. Particularly in relation to the figures or alluſions in the pſalms, the great object intended to be thereby ſet forth, might be underſtood by the promiſe of Chriſt, which had been given to our firſt parents, and more clearly afterwards to Abraham and others; by the emphaſis of the expreſſion, by the ſcope and connexion of the places wherein they occur, and by comparing them with other parts of divine revelation. With reſpect to us under the New diſpenſation, it is not denied by our opponents, that the thing ſignified by ſuch figurative expreſſions or alluſions is clearly revealed. Hence the caſe of theſe figures and alluſions in our ſongs of praiſe is quite different from that of a parable relating to a ſubject altogether unknown; the grand ſubject of the typical alluſions or figures, having been really revealed in the Old Teſtament, and being now more clearly revealed in the New. Nor can it be denied, that, though our Lord's parables might, in the righteous judgment of God, be an occaſion of increaſing the blindneſs of the Phariſees, and others who hated inſtruction, (as Chriſt himſelf is ſaid to be for a ſtone of ſtumbling, and for a rock of offence to both the houſes of Iſrael, for a gin and for a ſnare to the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, Iſai. viii. 14.) yet the moſt proper and direct end of them was, by ſimilitudes taken from earthly things to render the apprehenſion of ſpiritual things more eaſy and familiar to us.* This way of communicating inſtruction,

* Parabala clara et aperta hominibus non plane rudibus, ſed bene attentis; petita a rebus communibus et nemini non familiaribus. Licet enim quandoque fiat, ut quidam eam non intelligant, non tamen tam vitio parabolæ id fit, quam audientium, non tam medii ſeu objecti culpa, quam ſubjecti. *Otia Theologica Salleni*, pag. 695. *Henry on Pſal. lxxviii.* 2. obſerves, that the things here

ſtruction, ſays Eraſmus, however low and puerile it appears to the wiſe men of the world, ſeemed good to Eternal Wiſdom, as being the beſt adapted to the rude and ignorant. Our Lord preferred this ſimple and condeſcending method, to the artful ſyllogiſms of the philoſophers, to the rounded periods of the rhetoricians, and to the abſtruſe ſpeculations of the Phariſees. We may add, that parables ſerve to kindle in us a deſire to know what is contained in them; and frequently afford a ſweet experience of our Lord's condeſcenſion in making uſe of earthly ſimilitudes to introduce us, inſenſibly and before we are aware, to the contemplation of heavenly and ſpiritual things.

The objector intimates, that we ſhould diſcontinue the ſinging of the ſcripture-ſongs, that we may worſhip not in the

here ſpoken of are called dark ſayings, not becauſe they are hard to be underſtood, but becauſe they are greatly to be admired and carefully to be looked into. Parables, or ſimilies, may be dark in relation to the knowledge and capacity of particular perſons; and yet, a certain degree of knowledge or information in the hearers or readers being ſuppoſed, they may contribute to make the ſubject, upon which they are uſed, be more eaſily underſtood. Thus we may conceive how our Lord's parables might be dark to many, who heard him deliver them; and yet to his diſciples, when they had received ſuitable inſtruction, as *Mr. Calvin on Mat. xiii.* 10. obſerves, the figurative way of ſpeaking uſed in parables, might not only be more efficacious to move the affections, but alſo more perſpicuous. Thus, alſo, we may underſtand, that many of our Lord's ſayings, even when he was ſpeaking by way of parables, might, for ſome time, appear as proverbs or enigmas to his diſciples, according to John xvi. 25. For, as the ſame judicious commentator obſerves, Chriſt did not ſpeak enigmatically or obſcurely to his diſciples: On the contrary, he uſed an eaſy and familiar manner of expreſſion. But his ſayings appeared to them obſcure, from their ſmall degree of knowledge and aptneſs to apprehend ſpiritual things. Hence it is evident, that no argument can be drawn from the metaphors and alluſions in the pſalms, againſt our continuing to ſing them in ſolemn worſhip, unleſs it could be proved, that the knowledge and information, neceſſary to the underſtanding of them, are not ſo attainable now as formerly: For it appears, that the neceſſary knowledge and information being pre-ſuppoſed, theſe metaphors and alluſions, inſtead of obſcuring, render the pſalms more perſpicuous.

the letter, but in the Spirit; alluding to the expreſſion of the apoſtle in Rom. vii. 6. *That we ſhould ſerve in the newneſs of the Spirit, and not in the oldneſs of the letter.* To ſerve God in the newneſs of the Spirit, is to ſerve him according to the ſpiritual and evangelical principles by which men are influenced in a renewed ſtate; whereas to ſerve him in the oldneſs of the letter, is to be underſtood of that conſtrained ſervice which is only according to the principles of their old unrenewed ſtate. We are ſure, that David's exerciſes, repreſented in the pſalms, are examples of ſerving God in newneſs of ſpirit. How then can perſons be juſtly charged with worſhipping or ſerving in the letter, on account of their ſinging pſalms repreſenting thoſe exerciſes; or on account of their ſinging pſalms indited by the Spirit of God, and deſigned by him for promoting the worſhip or ſervice that is in the newneſs of the Spirit?

We are much reproached as preferring pſalms in Old Teſtament language, to thoſe in New Teſtament language. But the true ſtate of the caſe is, that we only prefer inſpired forms of pſalmody to thoſe of human compoſition, and the appointment of God as to what particular ſongs ſhould be uſed in ſolemn worſhip, to the dictates of men's wiſdom in that matter. Could any other inſpired forms of pſalms be produced, about which it is as plain and certain, that they were given to be ſung in the ſolemn worſhip of the church under the New Teſtament diſpenſation, as it is, that the book of pſalms was given for that purpoſe under the Old, we would as readily uſe the former in ſolemn worſhip, as the latter. But no other inſpired forms of pſalms, delivered to the church for that purpoſe, are to be found. We therefore conclude, that they were not neceſſary; and that the pſalms, which we have in the Old Teſtament, are ſtill to be uſed in ſolemn worſhip.

With reſpect to the language of the Old and New Teſtament, there is much truth in the following words of a ſenſible writer:* Who, having obſerved, that the term Son was applied to a Divine Perſon under the Old Teſtament, adds, that "the Jewiſh rulers could not have entertained an idea of the Son without admitting an idea of "the

* Preſident Forbes, in his Thoughts of Religion.

" the Father, which must have made that term also familiar " to them. So that in this instance it is, as, in almost every " other, it will, on a careful examination, be found to be, " the New Testament speaks the language of the Old; the " principles and sentiments are the same." The author of an Examination, &c. pag. 100. indeed represents those who are capable of believing that the language of the Old and New Testaments is the same, as ignorant, and him who asserts it, as shameless. But how he has succeeded in attempting to support this hard sentence, by the following instances of pretended opposition between the language of the Old Testament and that of the New, the reader may judge. " In " the Old Testament," says he, " trangressors are command- " ed to bring certain offerings specified, according to the " particular case; and with regard to each, it is said, the " priest shall make atonement for his sin, and it shall " be forgiven him. In the New Testament the apostle says, " It is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take " away sin." But surely he might, as well, have set the Old Testament in opposition to itself: For it, no less than the New, represents the pardon of sin as not to be procured by the most costly oblations of slain beasts. Mic. vi. 6, 7. *Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings and calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, or the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?* Psal. lx. 6. *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire: burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required.* But in truth there is no real opposition here: the offering of bulls and goats could never make any real atonement, as the one text says; but it might make a typical one; that is, might be a shadow of the real atonement, as the other certainly means. Again, " in the Old " Testament it is said, that the uncircumcised man child " shall be cut off from the people. The New Testament " says, that if we be circumcised Christ Jesus shall profit us " nothing." But there is as little real opposition in this instance as in the former. For these two texts speak of circumcision in different seasons: the one refers to a season in which it was a standing ordinance; the other to the season in which

which it was abrogated. They alſo ſpeak of it in different reſpects: the one regards the right uſe of it, as a commanded duty, and as a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of faith; the other, according to the true ſcope of the epiſtle from which it is taken, regards an abuſe of it, to the ſupport of the opinion of ſelf-righteouſneſs, in oppoſition a ſingle dependence on the righteouſneſs of Chriſt as the only ground of our juſtification before God. Once more; "In the Old "Teſtament the Jews were commanded to kill a lamb, roaſt "it with fire, and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter "herbs, as the Lord's paſſover. The language of the New "Teſtament is, Chriſt our paſſover is ſacrificed for us." It is hard to ſay, what our author means to place in oppoſition here; as the expreſſion of the apoſtle, which he quotes, only tends to lead us to the ſpiritual import of the paſſover. Perhaps he means, that there is no repreſentation of Chriſt in the Old Teſtament correſponding with the paſſover. But this is a miſtake. There were two things principally remarkable in the paſſover; there was an offering or ſacrifice; and there was ſomething to be eaten or fed on. But Chriſt is ſet forth to us in the Old Teſtament under both theſe notions: Iſa liii. 10. *Thou ſhalt make his ſoul an offering for ſin;* and lv. 2. *Eat ye that which is good*, or the *Good One;* for ſo the Hebrew word is uſed in 2 Chron. xxx. 18. *Jehovah the Good One.* Here, by the way, it may be obſerved, that it is not, as our author ſeems to think, peculiar to the New Teſtament, to ſhew the meaning and aſſert the abrogation of types. The meaning of the ceremonial offerings may be gathered from ſuch an expreſſion as that now quoted from the liiid of Iſaiah; and the meaning of David's typical royalty from ſuch a declaration as that which we have in Iſai. ix. 6, 7. *His name ſhall be called, the Mighty God—the Prince of Peace—upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom.* The abrogation of ſacrifices is alſo intimated in the Old Teſtament, Dan. ix. 27. *In the midſt of the week he ſhall cauſe the ſacrifice and the oblation to ceaſe.* It is not requiſite here to enter into a particular diſcuſſion of the evidence which the Old Teſtament affords of the abrogation of the practice of the ceremonial law. But ſurely, to allow that it affords none at all, is, in a great meaſure, if not entirely, to give up the cauſe of Chriſtianity to the Jews. Thus, our author makes

makes but a poor hand of it, when he attempts to set the language of the Old Testament and that of the New at variance. That they are indeed the same, is a principle upon which we proceed in making use of the Old Testament for ascertaining the sense of the most important words and phrases of the New: Such as, atonement, offering, propitiation, justification, prophet, priest, believing in God, walking before him, &c. The truth of this principle is also evident from the canons for the interpretation of scripture, as they are laid down by Glassius and others, being applied indiscriminately to both the Old and New Testament.

After all, there is reason to apprehend, that this objection against the use of the scripture-psalmody in our worship, namely, that the allusions to the ceremonial law render it obscure, cannot be the principal objection of our opponents, though it is much insisted on, as being plausible and popular. For, in the first place, the passages of the psalms, wherein such allusions occur, are far from being numerous. It is obvious, that the bulk of the psalms have an immediate reference to that practice and experience of godliness which has been, in all ages of the church, and ever will be the same. And, in the second place, a multitude of verses of the original psalms, which have no such allusions to Old Testament rites, are left out or altered in the new psalmody corrected by Mr. Barlow. The attempt to thrust any one of these verses out of the place, which it possessed in the public and solemn worship of the church, needs a solid and weighty reason to justify it. And the question comes home to the conscience of every follower of the new scheme of psalmody, Why dost thou refuse to sing such a verse of a song which the Spirit of God has been pleased to give thee in his word?

Sect. XVII. 2 *Cor. iii.* 12, 13. *considered.*

Objection. "Though we should allow the things of "the gospel to be truly contained in the book of psalms, "yet the Old Testament, and consequently the psalms of "it, are represented as a veil, which hides a person's face, "so that he cannot have a just conception of it, 2 Cor. iii. "12, 13. *Seeing then that we use great plainness of speech,* "*and*

" *and not as Moſes, who put a veil over his face, that the* " *children of Iſrael could not ſtedfaſtly look to the end of that* " *which is aboliſhed.* The veil on the face of Moſes repre- " ſented the obſcurity of the Jewiſh diſpenſation. In a " following verſe the apoſtle aſſerts, that this veil, or obſcuri- " ty, is done away in Chriſt; his manifeſtations in the fleſh, " and the New Teſtament diſcoveries of the whole ſcheme " of ſalvation through him, has thrown ſuch light on that " diſpenſation, as to diſpel the miſt in which it was enve- " loped."

ANSWER. The objector here grants, that the miſt or obſcurity, in which the Old Teſtament diſpenſation was enveloped, is diſpelled by the New Teſtament diſcoveries: He muſt, therefore, allow, that the obſcurity of the pſalms, ſo far as it aroſe from the obſcurity of that diſpenſation, is alſo expelled. The light, then, which is here allowed to be thrown on the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, has removed that obſcurity from the pſalms, which is all the objection here offered againſt the ſinging of them in our worſhip.

It muſt, however, be owned to be unwarrantable to ſay, that the Old Teſtament was a veil that hid the face of Chriſt from the members of the Old Teſtament church, ſo that they could not have juſt conceptions of it. For it is plain, that we have juſt conceptions of an object, ſo far as we have any certain knowledge of it at all. But we have ſeen that there was ſuch a revelation of Chriſt in the Old Teſtament ſcriptures, as was a ſufficient outward mean of attaining a certain knowledge of Chriſt before his incarnation; and conſequently of attaining juſt conceptions of him. As the teſtimony of the Old Teſtament ſcriptures concerning Chriſt is undoubtedly juſt, ſo were the conceptions which believers had of him correſponding with that infallible teſtimony.

With regard to the text in 2 Cor. iii. 13. we cannot allow, that according to this paſſage, the veil on the face of Moſes ſignified, that it was directly the deſign of the Old Teſtament diſpenſation to veil Chriſt, or to hinder the Iſraelites from looking to the end of that which was to be aboliſhed, becauſe this does not agree with the following verſe, which teacheth us, that what hindered the Iſraelites from looking to the end of that which is aboliſhed, was the blindneſs of their minds; which appears to be the thing

thing ſignified by the veil of Moſes. The ſuppoſition, that a double veil, (one objective in reſpect of the obſcurity of the types and figures, the other ſubjective in reſpect of the blindneſs of their minds) was ſignified by the veil which Moſes put over his face, ſeems to be without ſufficient ground in the text; for the veil upon the hearts of the children of Iſrael, is not ſaid, in ver. 14. to be another, but the very ſame veil (the apoſtle expreſſes it with great preciſion, as if he meant to guard againſt any miſtake in the matter, το αυτο καλυμμα) of which that on the face of Moſes was a ſign.* The principal objection that occurs to this view of the paſſage is, that the Greek words, in ver. 18. rendered *with open face*, may be read *in the unveiled face*, [that is, of Chriſt]. But as the veil of ignorance and unbelief renders the face of Chriſt veiled to us, in like manner as it renders him a ſtone of ſtumbling and a rock of offence; ſo the Holy Spirit, as a Spirit of illumination in the knowledge of

* "The ſhining glory of Moſes' face did not preſigure or ſignify the glory of Chriſt; but the glory of the law given to the Iſraelites as the covenant of works, the glory of the miniſtration of death, ver. 7. The veil which Moſes put on his face, keeping the Iſraelites from beholding the glory of it, ſignifies, that their minds were blinded, ver. 14. not perceiving the glory of the law, given to them as the covenant of works. And hence it was, that the children of Iſrael *faſtened not their eyes*, Luke iv. 20. Acts. iii. 4. *on* [Chriſt] *the end of that which is abroliſhed*, 2 Corinth. iii. 13. Greek. For had they ſeen that glory to purpoſe, they would have *faſtened* their eyes on *him*; as a malefactor at the ſtake would fix his eyes on the face of one bringing a remiſſion. And this is the veil which is upon Moſes' face and their hearts unto this day, ver. 14, 15. which nevertheleſs, in the Lord's apointed time *ſhall be taken away*, ver. 16." *Mr. Boſton's Notes on the Marrow of modern Divinity; ſecond chapter, ſect. 5. §. 5.* Here we may add Glaſſius' paraphraſe of the 14, 15, and 16 verſes. "As the Iſraelites ſaw not the ſplendor of Moſes' face for the veil put over it, ſo the carnal Jews underſtand not Chriſt Jeſus the Saviour, the great end and ſcope of the writings of Moſes, by reaſon of the wilfully contracted blindneſs of their minds, which, like a veil, comes between their hearts and the right underſtanding of the law, and which cannot be taken away, but by their converſion to the Lord." *Rhetorica Sacra, Tractatu primo, cap.* 21.

of Christ, in removing our ignorance and unbelief, may well be said to unveil his face; as, in external vision, from which the apostle's metaphor is taken, when a film, which had rendered a person blind, is removed from his eyes, the beauty or glory of the face of nature may be said to be unveiled to him.

But though, with some valuable commentators, we should here admit the supposition of a double veil; yet this passage, even according to their sense of it, makes nothing for the *present* obscurity of the psalms; which is the obscurity about which we enquire: For these commentators allow, that the objective veil is now removed from the Old Testament writings by the coming of Christ, and by the clear explications of the New Testament.*

The objector confounds the Old Testament scripture with the Old Testament dispensation. But there is an obvious difference between them. The former are the word of God, which endureth for ever, revealing the covenant of grace, or the plan of salvation through a Redeemer; all things contained therein being either essential or subservient parts of that plan; and continuing a standard of the church's faith and practice, till the end of the world. The latter is commonly understood to be what was peculiar in God's way of dealing with his church before the coming of Christ; particularly, in prescribing the temporary practice of the ceremonial and judicial laws. Though it should be allowed, that the Old Testament dispensation, abstractly considered, was in some sense, a veil; yet it would not follow, that the Old Testament scriptures, according to their true meaning, were ever so; as they contain much that tended to shew the true and spiritual meaning of the typical observances which belonged to that dispensation.

SECT. XVIII. *Whether the Old Testament be still a Rule of Faith and Practice.*

IT is undoubtedly the doctrine of the Old and New Testaments, that both are the rule of our faith and practice; and that, in point of authority and obligation, there is no difference between them: 1. Because the whole scripture is

* See Dr. Guise on this passage.

is represented as such a rule to us, 2 Tim. iii. 16. *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and instruction in righteousness.* Surely the Old Testament could not answer these ends, unless it were a rule of faith and practice to us. 2. Because, in the New Testament, we are frequently referred to the Old as the rule of faith and practice, Luke xvi. 29. *They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.* 2 Pet. i. 7. *We have a more sure word of prophecy, to which ye do well that ye take heed, as to a light shining in a dark place.* 3. Because Christ and his apostles continually appealed to the scriptures of the Old Testament, as the rule and warrant of their doctrine and practice, John v. 39, 46. *Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me.* Acts xviii. 28. *He mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ,* Rom. iv. 24. *It was not written for his sake alone, but for us also.* If the Old Testament were not a rule of faith and practice to us under the New Testament dispensation, the Bereans would not have been commended for examining the doctrine of the apostles by it, Acts xvii. 2. *These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily; whether these things were so.* 4. The New Testament, instead of abrogating, confirms and establishes the authority of the Old, declaring its perpetuity, Mat. v. 18. *For verily, I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or tittle shall, in no wise, pass from the law till all be fulfilled.* And representing the church as built upon the Old Testament as well as upon the New. Ephes. ii. 20. *Ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.*

Objection. We have what is sufficient for salvation in the New Testament.

Answer. This expression is ambiguous; for if by being sufficient for salvation, be meant, what the Holy Spirit may, in a way of sovereignty, bless as an outward mean of salvation; in that sense, all that is necessary is in the five books of Moses. But if by sufficiency be meant a sufficient rule

rule of all that measure of faith and practice which God had declared he will have his church brought to, and which, in that case, it is criminal and pernicious to neglect, we maintain that, in this sense, the New Testament, without the Old, is not sufficient. The New Testament, continually proceeding upon and referring to the Old, could not well be understood without it. Some matters of faith and practice are revealed in the Old Testament alone; as the eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, by which the covenant of works was broken, and the degrees of kindred within which marriage is forbidden. Some things are far more fully revealed in the Old Testament; as the creation. There also we have a greater variety of the precious promises, which the Lord hath adapted, with great particularity, to the various cases of his church and people.

OBJECTION. If we hold the Old Testament to be a perpetual rule of faith and practice, then we ought to observe the ceremonial and judicial laws of Moses.

ANSWER. This will by no means follow. For the same comprehensive rule may require different duties to be performed, in different seasons and circumstances, and on different accounts and occasions. This is necessary to be attended to, in order to the right use of the New Testament itself as a rule. We are not now bound to the formalities of abstaining from blood, of washing one another's feet, or of anointing the sick with oil, however the observation of them was prescribed as necessary for a time. With respect to the ceremonial and judicial laws, they obtained their end fully in the coming of Christ; the ceremonial law being a shadow of him that was to come; and the judicial being designed to preserve the genealogies and distinctions of families, till the promise made to David, that he, in whom he believed as his Lord, would in due time be his Son, should be fulfilled. Both the ceremonial and judicial laws then ceased of course. They were abrogated by the Old Testament itself; Gen. xlix. 10. *The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.* Jer. iii. 16. *And it shall come to pass in those days, saith the Lord, that they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord; neither shall it come to mind, neither shall they remember*

remember it, neither shall they visit it, neither shall that be done any more. Dan. ix. 27. *And he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.* Accordingly, in the epistle to the Hebrews, the ceremonial law is shewn to be abrogated from the Old Testament itself: See, among other places, Heb. viii. 13. xii. 27.*

Since the Old Testament is our rule, as well as the New, we are bound to imitate an approved example of the observation of any ordinance of God's worship, which is not ceremonial, though it be found in the Old Testament only. And therefore, unless the singing of the book of psalms could be shewn to be a ceremonial institution, (a thing which never can be shewn) we are bound to imitate the example of it recorded in the Old Testament.

SECT. XIX. *Whether the Churches planted by the Apostles were unacquainted with the Books of the Old Testament, and particularly with the Psalms.*

OBJECTION. "Can it be conceived, that the members "of a church, the body of which were Gentiles, and "wholly unacquainted with former revelations, would understand by *the word of Christ*, any of the books of the "Old Testament. And from the scarcity of the copies of "the scriptures in the early ages of christianity, it may be "concluded, that the churches among the Gentiles were "unacquainted with the books of the Old Testament, and "consequently with the psalms."†

ANSWER. To suppose a christian church without any acquaintance with the books of the Old Testament, is to suppose it ignorant of its own foundation;—for, according to Ephes. ii. 20. true church-members are built upon the foundation

* This paragraph shews, that the abuse with which the author of an Examination, &c. pag. 7. entertains his readers, is as groundless, as it is low and unmanly. A little reflection might have convinced him, that the Old Testament might be a perpetual rule to the church of God on earth as well as the New, tho' the practice of various duties enjoined in it was limited to a certain season; especially, if he had observed, that the passage, which he was abusing, represents both these Testaments as concurrent to make one consistent rule.

† A Discourse on Psalmody, pag. 24.

foundation of the prophets, as well as of the apoſtles. We have reaſon to believe, that, in the churches of Rome and Corinth, as great a proportion of the members were of Gentile extraction, as in the church of Coloſſe, or any other to which Paul directed his epiſtles; and yet we find him, in his epiſtles to the Romans and Corinthians, quoting the Old Teſtament ſcriptures, and particularly the pſalms, in a manner which plainly ſuppoſes the people to whom he writes, to be acquainted with them. Rom. iii. 10, 11, 12, 13. iv. 6, 7, 8. xi. 9, 10. xv. 9, 11. 1 Cor. xiv. 21. 2 Cor. iv. 13.

With reſpect to the queſtion, How thoſe that lived among the Gentiles could be acquainted with the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament? we obſerve, that there were three things, among others, that, in the courſe of providence, ſerved eminently to prepare the way for the propagation of the goſpel among the Gentiles: One was, the diſperſion of the Jews by the Babyloniſh captivity: Another was, that, in conſequence of the conqueſts of Alexander, the Greek language was commonly underſtood through a great part of Aſia, as well as Europe: And the third thing was, the tranſlation of the Old Teſtament into the Greek language, which was made upwards of 280 years before the Chriſtian æra. The Jews, called Helleniſts, who were diſperſed in moſt of theſe Gentile countries, wherein the apoſtles preached, had the Greek tranſlation of the Old Teſtament read in their ſynogogues every ſabbath. Hence it appears, that the people of theſe countries had a good opportunity of getting an acquaintance with the writings of the Old Teſtament. Beſides, when Juſtin Martyr is giving an account of the ordinary public worſhip of the primitive chriſtians, he ſays, "The memoirs of the a-"poſtles or the writings of the prophets are read, according "as the time allows,"* By theſe means the primitive chriſtians could not fail to have ſome familiar acquaintance with the Old Teſtament, and particularly with the book of pſalms, which the New Teſtament quotes more frequently than any other book of the Old Teſtament.

CHAP.

* Juſtin Martyr, quoted by Lardner in his Credibility of Goſpel Hiſtory, vol. IId. pag. 122.

CHAP. IV.

Shewing that no other than the Scripture-ſongs ought to be ſung in the Solemn Worſhip of the Church.

HAVING ſhewn our warrant for the ſinging of the inſpired pſalms in ſolemn worſhip, from their being ſo given of God for that purpoſe, as no other ever were; from the example of the uſe of them in the church under the Old diſpenſation; and from the futility and error of the objections which have been offered againſt the ſinging of them under the New diſpenſation; it follows, as a corollary, that the ſcripture-ſongs are the only forms of pſalmody that ought to be made uſe of in the public and ſolemn worſhip of the church.* This propoſition was defended in the Diſcourſe on Singing Pſalms, by ſome arguments: We ſhall review them in order, and conſider the exceptions that occur.

SECT. I. *Whether there be any Scripture-warrants for Singing Hymns of Human Compoſure in Solemn Worſhip.*

WE argue, in the firſt place, from the ſilence of ſcripture with reſpect to the uſe of any other than the ſcripture-ſongs in the ordinary ſolemn worſhip of the church.

Col. iii. 16. being much inſiſted on as a warrant for the ſinging of human compoſures in the ordinary ſolemn worſhip of the church; ſome obſervations may here be added to what was ſaid in the Diſcourſe, concerning that text.

With

* This the author of the Examination, &c. will hardly oppoſe; for he ſays, pag. 84. "If this foundation," viz. that God deſigned the pſalms to be a ſtanding form of public pſalmody, both under the Old and New Teſtaments, "were eſtabliſhed, then it "would have this corollary contained in it, that they are the "beſt adapted to that uſe; and conſequently, that they are rather "to be ſung than any other."

With respect to the three names here given such compositions as are proper to be sung, namely, Psalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, it may be observed, in the first place, That there is no reason to infer from these names, that any part of the book of psalms is unfit to be sung in the solemn worship of the New Testament church, or that it is not a sufficient system for that worship. There might be some ground for such an inference, if the apostle had mentioned a sort of songs quite different from any that are to be found in the book of psalms. But there are many in that book of each of the sorts here mentioned. As to psalms, there can be no dispute. With respect to hymns, the book is called *Sepher Tehillim*, a book of praises, or hymns. Many of them are eminently hymns, or songs of praise, such as the cxlvth and following psalms. With respect to songs, the Hebrew name *Shir* which is prefixed to many of the psalms, is always rendered a song. And they may well be called spiritual songs, whether we consider the Author of them, the Holy Spirit, the subject of them, namely, what respects the case of the soul, or the use of them, which is to promote our spiritual good. No human compositions are so well entitled to that epithet.

Hence it appears very strange, how the author of a Sermon on the Duty of Christians in Singing Praise to God,* could assert,

* Page 8. He observes, "that many suppose, that the apostle, "by all these various terms, meant nothing more or less than the "book of psalms contained in the Old Testament." But he ought to have been at some pains in stating the sense, in which these words are understood by those whom he pretends to confute: For they consider the apostle as referring christians to the psalms, hymns and spiritual songs contained in the word of Christ; not such as they might form out of the matter of it, by the exertion of a genius for poetry, but to such as they might find in it having the form and designation of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. It is as if the apostle had said, Be familiarly acquainted with the whole word of Christ, contained in the holy scriptures, and take particular delight in the psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, which you will find there, and which you are not only to read, as you are to do the rest of the scriptures, but also to sing, as affording spiritual instruction, and a divine pattern for the exercise of gracious affections. The question is not, as this author absurdly states it, "Whether the "the book of psalms is called by all these various names in the "New

assert, that "*there are no authentic records, sacred or profane, "which prove that the psalms of David bore these various "titles;*" since these are the very titles which accompany the psalms; and the Greek words which are rendered *psalms, hymns and songs*, are all found in the Septuagint translation of the titles of the psalms.

OBJECTION.

"New Testament?" but merely, Whether forms of composition, bearing these names, and fully answering the import of them, be found in the book of psalms. The apostle says, *Ye have forgotten the word of exhortation, which speaketh unto you, as unto children, My son, despise thou not the chastening of the Lord.* Our author's reasoning here is, as if one should deny, that, by the word of exhortation here, is to be understood a passage in the book of Proverbs; on pretence that it could not be shewn, that the Proverbs are called words of exhortation in any other part of the New Testament. It is as plain, that there are psalms, hymns and songs, in what is called the book of Psalms, as that there are words of exhortation in the book of Proverbs. This is plain even from his own account of these names. As to psalms, there is no dispute. With respect to an hymn, he says, "it is a poetical "composition made to celebrate some person or action, or, to "bewail some mournful event; and although it may be accom-"panied with an instrument or the voice, yet these are not ne-"cessary to its original design." What he means by saying, that it is not necessary to the original design of a hymn, that it be accompanied with the voice, seems hardly intelligible, except perhaps to a connoisseur in the art of music. For, a common reader will be apt to think, that the reciting or singing of a hymn must be by the voice; and that it is the original design of such a composition to be recited or sung. But, passing this, he cannot deny, that the cxth psalm is a composition celebrating the person and actions of the Messiah; or that the xcth bewails a mournful event. As to the songs here meant, our author says, "they are songs on "spiritual subjects, calculated to give religious instruction, and "to raise and quicken devotion in the soul." That we have such songs in the book of psalms, it is hoped he will not deny. Josephus, who must be allowed to have known very well what names were usually given to the compositions in the book of psalms, calls them, as the apostle does here, songs and hymns. *Jewish Antiquities, Book vii. Chap.* 10. But the truth is, it is sufficient to our purpose, that the three Greek names used by the apostle are exactly answerable to the three Hebrew names above mentioned in the titles of the psalms. Nor is it any question among commentators, critics, and lexicographers, whether these Hebrew and Greek names be exactly parallel, and may be rendered

OBJECTION. "Our songs of praise should be composed "of the matter which the New Testament reveals; because "the apostle exhorts us to teach and to admonish one ano- "ther in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, from the "rich indwelling of the word of Christ, which has a pecu- "liar reference to the New Testament."*

ANSWER. We have already seen, that the church has no new matter to sing of in the New Testament, which it had not at all before in the Old.† The christian religion is not a new

ed by one another: This is a point in which they are agreed, and this is sufficient to shew, that we need not go farther than the book of psalms for all these three sorts of composition. The argument does not require that we should give ourselves any trouble about the different glosses of divines.

It may be added, that our opponents allow, that by the psalms here we are to understand the book of psalms. They cannot deny, then, that the apostle enjoins us to sing that book in solemn worship; consequently, according to him, the singing of that book cannot be, as they represent it, improper and unwarrantable under the New Testament dispensation.

* Examination, &c. pag. 6.

† The author of a Discourse on Psalmody, in a note, p. 118, 119, 120. after a quotation from Witsius de Oeconomia Fœderum, concerning the advantages of New Testament believers above those under the Old, represents the doctrine of that excellent divine, as contrary to what is here taught. But most unjustly. For, 1. In this very place, Witsius represents the spiritual privilege of adoption as having been materially the same under the Old Testament dispensation, that it is under the New. "There is no "doubt," says he, "but that all believers were at all times the "sons of God. What we have already said of the foundations of "this glorious state is applicable to the Old Testament saints. "A new life was given them by regeneration, and they were cre- "ated again after the image of God. They were also espoused "to Christ, Hos. ii. 19, 20. Their Maker was their Husband, "Isai. liv. 5. And the Old Testament church is called the marri- "ed wife, in the first verse of the chapter. Who are Israelites, to "whom pertaineth the adoption, Rom. ix. 4; and in a word, they "were heirs of all things, Gal. iv. 1. heirs of divine grace in "this life, Psal. xvi. 5. and of divine glory in the life to come, "Psal. xvii. 15." From these words, which are immediately followed by the quotation above mentioned, it appears, that the differences mentioned in that quotation, between believers under the Old and those under the New dispensation, do not respect "the

a new religion, broached by Christ and his apostles. The Old Testament, as one justly observes, "implies and contains the New; and the New is but the explanation and "confirmation of the Old." Even the word of Christ, in the New Testament, dwelling in believers richly and in spiritual wisdom, so far from prejudicing them against the singing of the psalms, hymns and spiritual songs in the Old Testament,

"*the matter* of adoption, but *the manner* or *the degree* in which it was experienced and enjoyed under the two dispensations. The same privilege was held forth in the psalms and other places of the Old Testment; but the understanding, which Old Testament believers had of these places, was but obscure, compared with the understanding of them which may be attained under the New Testament. 2. The principles of Witsius on this head are stated and vindicated in the iid chap. of the 3d book. "We maintain," says he, sect. 2d. "agreeably to the holy scriptures, 1. That all "the elect, in whatever period they live, have one and the same "eternal life promised them; 2. That they have one and the "same Author and Giver of salvation, even Jesus, exhibited to "them; and, 3. That they never were partakers of him in any "other way than by a true and lively faith in him. The demonstration of these three things will make it evident, that the "covenant of grace, *quod ad rei substantiam attinet*, as to the "matter or substance of it, was, from the beginning, one only. "For if there was all along the same salvation, the same Author "of salvation, and no different way or mean of fellowship with "him, surely there could be no diversity in the covenant;" that is, in the matter of it. Such are the sentiments of that valuable writer. And these agree well with the expression condemned by the author of the Discourse on Psalmody. The church has properly no new matter to sing of in the New Testament, which she had not at all in the Old; for all the matter she has to sing of is comprehended in the covenant of grace. But what the Discourse asserts in the same place, "That the incarnation, life, death, ascension, "and glorification of our blessed Lord, are new matter," as being altogether unknown under the Old Testament, will never agree with Witsius, who teaches, that Noah preached "the "righteousness or obedience of the Messiah; that righteousness "by which the ungodly are justified, which is of God, and is opposed to our own righteousness." *Oecon. Fœd. lib. iv. cap 2d*, §7.; who also teaches, "that from the psalms of David may be learned "almost all the articles that are necessary to be held concerning "the person of Christ, concerning his offices, states, and benefits." *De Prophetis et Prophetia, cap. xviii.* § 15.

Teſtament, will make them prize them more highly, and ſing them more judiciouſly, and with more ſpiritual profit and delight. Nay, this ſpiritual wiſdom attending the inhabitation of the word of Chriſt in believers, will diſcern ſuch divine excellencies in the very frame and texture of the ſcripture-ſongs, as ſet them far above the choiceſt mere human compoſitions.

But why muſt this phraſe, the word of Chriſt, in this particular text, be underſtood as having a peculiar reference to the New Teſtament? Not ſurely, becauſe the phraſe, in itſelf, is ſuch as it would be improper to apply to the whole ſcriptures. It is a certain evidence of Chriſt's divinity, that the word, contained in the ſcriptures of the Old and New Teſtament, is his word. It is properly called his word, 1. Becauſe it was dictated by his Spirit; for the Spirit that was in the prophets was the Spirit of Chriſt, 1 Pet. i. 11. 2. Becauſe Chriſt is the great ſubject and ſcope of the ſcriptures, John v. 39. *They are they which teſtify of me.* The phraſe may ſometimes be limited by the words which accompany it, as in Mark viii. 38. *Whoſoever ſhall be aſhamed of me or of my words in this adulterous and ſinful generation*, &c. Where it muſt neceſſarily be underſtood of ſuch words, doctrines or commands of Chriſt, as church-members in that generation were, more eſpecially, in danger of being aſhamed of, Rev. iii. 8. *Thou haſt kept my word, and haſt not denied my name;* where it is evident, that the word of Chriſt was ſomething that church-members in Philadelphia were under a temptation to deny, which is called, in ver. 10. the word of Chriſt's patience. An examiner tells us, "That the whole "context leads us to underſtand the word of Chriſt, in "theſe texts, as referring to the profeſſion and practice of "chriſtianity in general." To this we reply, That it is not denied, that a renunciation of the profeſſion and practice of chriſtianity in general, would be the moſt flagrant inſtance of being aſhamed of Chriſt's word, or of denying it; but will he ſay, that the denying of a particular article of divine truth, as, that Jeſus is the true Meſſiah, or, that that he is the only true God as well as the Father, or, that there ſhall be a reſurrection of the body, would be no denial of the word of Chriſt? Or will he ſay, that no particular

cular point of truth or duty is referred to, when the church of Philadelphia is commended for keeping the word of Christ, the word of his patience? Or will he say, that persons need be apprehensive of no danger from the threatening against those that are ashamed of *the words of Christ*, on account of their being ashamed of any particular articles of that word, or any particular *words*, provided they be not ashamed of the profession and practice of christianity in general?* What we meant by adducing these instances, is, that if *the word of Christ* is not taken,

* The reader has here a vindication of a remark which was made on Mark viii. 38. and Rev. iii. 8. in the Discourse on Singing Psalms. The author of an Examination, &c. pag. 78. says concerning that remark, "I have mentioned this purely to shew "his method of interpreting scripture. Nothing can be more "groundless than to limit the phrase in these texts to some par-"ticular article of faith; the whole context leads us to under-"stand it as referring to the profession and practice of christian-"ity in general." If the writer of that Discourse had followed the Examiner's method of refutation, he might have made short work of what the Examiner advances about *the word of Christ*, by saying, as he does, "I have mentioned this purely to shew his "method of interpreting scripture. Nothing can be more ground-"less than to limit it to the New Testament." The reader must see by what is observed here, that neither the natural import of the phrase, nor yet what is said of it in Col. iii. 16. afford any reason for limiting it to the New Testament. But with respect to the other two texts, the passage of the Discourse referred to, offers no limitation but what is plainly included in the texts themselves: For this author himself will hardly have the effrontery to say, that a person would not sin against Christ by being ashamed of or denying a particular article of his word, as well as by being ashamed of, or denying the profession and practice of christianity in general; and this was all the writer of the Discourse intended; for he did not mean, that the phrase in these texts was to be limited to one particular article; but only that in the connexion wherein it stands in these texts, it must be understood of that which church-members are in danger of being ashamed of, or tempted to deny, which is often some particular article: Whereas there is no ground at all for the Examiner's limitation of it to the New Testament, in any one of the texts he has quoted, but his bare assertion, repeated, indeed, by him and the author of a Discourse on Psalmody *ad nauseam*. That the term, *logos*, or *word*, is sometimes used for a particular article of truth, is obvious. *See Tim. iv. 9. Tit. iii. 8. in the Greek New Testament.*

taken, in any place of ſcripture, for the whole word of God contained in the ſcriptures of the Old and New Teſtament; the reaſon is, not that there is any impropriety in calling the whole *the word of Chriſt*; but becauſe ſomething in the connexion renders it neceſſary to underſtand it in a more limited ſenſe; in which connexion the limitation would have been the ſame, ſuppoſing the word had been called *the word of God*. But in the text under conſideration, there is nothing in the words that accompany this phraſe, to hinder us from underſtanding it of the Old Teſtament as well as the New: For ſurely it is our duty to have the Old Teſtament ſcriptures dwelling in us richly, as the pſalmiſt had it, Pſal. cxix. 11. *Thy word have I hid in my heart.* ver. 93. *I will never forget thy precepts.* ver. 98. *Thy commandments are ever with me.* By the Old Teſtament, as well as by the New, we may attain ſpiritual wiſdom, not only to our own ſalvation, but to uſefulneſs in teaching and admoniſhing one another. Pſal. cxix. 99, 100. *I have more underſtanding than all my teachers; for thy teſtimonies are my meditation. I underſtand more than the ancients, becauſe I keep thy precepts.* And as to pſalms, hymns and ſpiritual ſongs, the Old Teſtament is the ſtorehouſe wherein they are laid up by Infinite Wiſdom in rich variety. Thus it appears, that there is nothing in the titles mentioned here, namely, *pſalms, hymns and ſpiritual ſongs*, nor in the phraſe, *the word of Chriſt*, which ought to deter us from continuing to ſing the book of pſalms in our ſolemn worſhip.

But, in the *ſecond* place, We have no warrant in this text, for ſinging in ſolemn worſhip, any other pſalms and hymns and ſpiritual ſongs, than thoſe which we have in the ſcriptures. It is a good maxim in the interpretation of the ſcripture, that what is wanting in one place is ſupplied by another. We are here taught by the apoſtle, that we are to ſing pſalms, hymns and ſpiritual ſongs. But if it be farther inquired, whether the pſalms, hymns and ſpiritual ſongs we are to ſing in ſolemn worſhip, be ſuch as are of human compoſure, or ſuch as are contained in ſcripture? we have a ſufficient anſwer, in the Lord's having given us a body of them expreſly bearing theſe very denominations, as has been ſhewn; and alſo in the divinely recorded and approved example of his church; which, as hath been ſhewn, is not an example of what was to be abrogated at the com-

commencement of the New Teſtament diſpenſation, but of what is to continue till the end of time. With regard to what we are to ſing in ſolemn worſhip, nothing more can be required by this text, than that we ſing what comes fully up to the import of theſe three names, pſalms, hymns and ſpiritual ſongs, and that we adhere to the more particular directions which the Lord hath given us in the other parts of his word. But we do ſo, when we ſing the ſcripture-ſongs. Therefore the conſcience has a ſolid ground of ſatisfaction in the ſinging of them, as the whole of what is here enjoined with reſpect to the form of pſalmody to be uſed in ſolemn worſhip.*

Here it may not be amiſs to take notice of ſome exceptions that have been offered to our view of this text. See the Preface of a Diſcourſe on Pſalmody.

" It ſhould be ſhewn," ſays the author of that Preface, in " the firſt place, that the *word of Chriſt* of which the apoſtle " ſpeaks to the Coloſſians, was ſo peculiarly reſtricted to the " pſalms of David, that what Chriſt himſelf delivered by his " own miniſtry and that of the apoſtles, was no part of that " word ;

* The author of the Examination, &c. pag. 8. intimates, that the writer of the Diſcourſe on Singing Pſalms, ſhould have proved, " that the ſcripture-ſongs are here meant excluſively:" Whereas it was certainly ſufficient to the purpoſe of that Diſcourſe, to ſhew the vanity of the pretence of finding a warrant in this text for the ſinging of human compoſures in ſolemn worſhip. It has been proved, by comparing this with other places of ſcripture; that the pſalms, hymns and ſpiritual ſongs, which are appointed to be ſung in ſolemn and public worſhip, are to be underſtood of thoſe only, which are found bearing theſe titles in the ſacred ſcriptures. But if it be meant, that we ſhould prove the ſame thing by this text alone, without conſidering it in connexion with what is taught in other places of ſcripture; the requiſition is as unreaſonable, as it would be to require us to diſprove by this text alone, or without conſidering what is taught on the ſame ſubject in other places of ſcripture, the aſſertion of ſome, that all church-members, according to their gifts or ability, are alike warranted or authorized to teach and admoniſh publicly. It may be of uſe to obſerve here, that the members of this verſe ſeem to be moſt diſtinct as they are pointed by the accurate Bengelius: *Let the word of Chriſt dwell in you richly, in all wiſdom, teaching and admoniſhing one another, in pſalms, hymns and ſpiritual ſongs: Singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

" word; and that the Coloſſians could not fail to have under-
" ſtood the apoſtle as meaning by the word of Chriſt thoſe
" pſalms.

Anſwer. By *the word of Chriſt*, we underſtand not the pſalms only, but the whole word of God contained in the ſcriptures of the Old and New Teſtament. With regard to the Coloſſians, there was nothing to hinder them as well as other chriſtians from underſtanding, that the exerciſe which is here recommended, as a conſequence of their having the word of Chriſt dwelling in them, is rather the ſinging of the pſalms, hymns and ſongs which are found in that word, than the making of new ones. For the apoſtle is here ſpeaking of the common duty of church-members: And, we hope, it will hardly be affirmed, that it is their common duty to make pſalms and hymns for public worſhip.

2. " They ſhould," ſays that author, " have ſhewn, that
" it is uſual with our apoſtle and the other ſacred writers,
" in mentioning the pſalms of David, to call them pſalms,
" hymns, and ſpiritual ſongs."

Anſwer. Theſe names are all found, as we have ſeen, in the inſcriptions of the pſalms; a circumſtance which leads us to think that they muſt have been their uſual names. So that if the Coloſſians were acquainted, as the apoſtle exhorts them to be, with the whole compaſs of the word of Chriſt, they could not be ignorant, that there are, in that word, compoſitions bearing the names of pſalms, hymns and ſongs.

3. " They ſhould have proved, that it was the duty of
" chriſtians not to draw the inſtructions and admonitions
" which they communicated to one another in theſe pſalms
" and hymns, from the doctrines and diſcourſes of our Savi-
" our and his apoſtles, but from the words of David and
" Aſaph."

Anſwer. There are two ways in which the diſcourſes of Chriſt and his apoſtles may be made uſe of with regard to our pſalms and hymns. The firſt is, to receive light from theſe diſcourſes for our direction in ſinging the inſpired pſalms in ſolemn worſhip with underſtanding and believing application. This we allow to be here intended by the apoſtle, as being the duty of all chriſtians. In ſinging the pſalms, which abound with divine and ſpiritual inſtructions and admonitions, chriſtians may well be ſaid to teach and admoniſh

monish one another. The second way is, that of making use of the matter of the books of the New Testament, as well as of the Old, in composing hymns and songs for the edification of themselves and others, without attempting to introduce them into the exercises of solemn worship. There seems to be nothing in the words of the apostle, that renders it necessary to suppose, that even this (which we allow to be warrantable in itself) was what he directly intended in this exhortation: For, as we have just now observed, we may teach and admonish one another by these forms of psalms, hymns and songs, which we have in the scriptures; and the common duty of christians, of which the apostle speaks here, is rather to sing psalms, making melody with their heart to the Lord, than to compose them. Much less can we allow, that these words of the apostle necessarily imply, what nobody will pretend they expressly say, that it is the duty of christians to compose psalms, hymns and songs, to be sung in the solemn and public worship of the church; as this would suppose, that they were not furnished in the word of Christ with inspired forms of psalms, hymns and songs, suitable to that purpose; that is, it would suppose what is manifestly false.

It may be observed, that our opponents allow, that *psalms* in this text, signifies the book of psalms, and consequently, that teaching and admonishing in psalms, is not to be understood of composing them; with what colour of reason then can they insist, that the same expression, in the same construction, used with regard to hymns and songs, is necessarily to be so understood?

4. "They should have shewn, that the whole worship of "the Old Testament was conducted in the name of the Lord "Jesus, and that the songs of praise and thanksgiving under "that dispensation, were expressly offered up to the Father "through Christ."

Answer. We have shewn, that the church and people of God, in all ages, *really*, or in fact approached to God by Christ, or in his name. This is to be understood in each of the psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, which we have in scripture. With regard to what our author seems to insist on, that our prayers and praises should be *expressly* offered up in Christ's name, we allow that this truth is, now, under the

New dispensation, set in the clearest light, that there never was nor is any acceptable worship of God by fallen man, without a believing regard to Christ's name. This we should be ready to declare to all who are ignorant of it or deny it. But if the author means, that the use of the words or syllables, *through Christ*, or *in his name*, is necessary to render our prayers or praise acceptable to God, he is chargeable with childish trifling. These words are not found in the Lord's prayer: Is it therefore not fit for New Testament worship? Or is it not a pattern of coming to God in the name of Christ?

We now proceed to the consideration of another text, adduced by such as plead for the singing of human compositures in solemn worship; which is 1 Cor. xiv. 26. *How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation.*

In the preceding verses of this chapter, the apostle treats of the extraordinary gifts with which the Corinthian church was so abundantly furnished. He reproves them for their undue preference of the gift of tongues, of which, it appears, they were very ostentatious. He shews them the folly of using that gift so, as to hinder the church from being edified by other gifts, particularly by that of prophesying. From the 26th verse to the end of the chapter, the apostle shews how all these gifts might have a place in the public administrations, and be exercised to the general edification. In this verse we have an enumeration of these extraordinary gifts. The expostulatory form of this enumeration seems to imply a reproof of the Corinthians, not only for their disorder, but for the vanity of the pretensions of many among them to these gifts. Hence the apostle, in a following verse, directs, that, *while two or three prophesy, the others should judge.*

We may observe, with respect to the gifts here enumerated, that most of them are included in that of prophesying. That *revelation* and *interpretation* were included in it, will not be doubted, when we consider, that it was the office of the prophets in the times of the apostles, to interpret by an extraordinary gift of the Spirit, the prophecies of the Old Testament, and to shew their exact agreement with those things

things that were taught by the apostles and evangelists. The apostles, indeed, were prophets of the most eminent rank; but there were some prophets who were not apostles. Thus, it is said of Judas and Silas, that being prophets, *they exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them*, Acts xv. 32. "The gift of prophecy," says a most learned writer,* "may be said sometimes to coincide with the gift "of wisdom, sometimes to differ from it, as the whole "from a part. For to some was given prophecy, by which "they might dextrously interpret and judiciously apply "theological or doctrinal matters only, in preaching, in "conference and disputation, in prayers and hymns, 1 Cor. "xiv. 3, 4, 25, 31. coinciding with wisdom and knowledge, "and, in ver. 26. distinctly pointed out by the synonimous "terms of a psalm and a doctrine. To others was given "prophecy, by which they might not only do what is now "mentioned, but also know and foretel hidden and future "things by divine revelations and visions." It has been justly observed by Witsius,† and others, that the gift of prophecy is represented in scripture as exercised in singing the divine praises, of this we have a remarkable instance in 1 Sam. x. 5, 6. where Samuel says to Saul, *When thou art come to the city, thou shalt meet a company of prophets, coming down from the high place, with a psaltery, and a tabret and a harp before them, and they shall prophecy:* That is, they shall utter such songs of praise as were immediately suggested by the Holy Spirit: For the denomination of prophecy was not given to every song on a religious or sacred subject; but to those only that were uttered under an extraordinary and immediate agency of the Holy Spirit; as is intimated in the following words of Samuel to Saul: *And the Spirit of the Lord shall come upon thee; and thou shalt prophecy with them.*

The psalm, which a prophet in the Corinthian church is here said to have, was either one of the Old Testament psalms,

* Voetii Disput. de signis et charismatis. Dr. Owen calls Voetius πολυμαθη τα τοτ, ob rarum eruditionem, pietatem singularem ac veritatis amorem nunquam satis laudandus.

† Miscellan. Sacra de Prophetis.

pſalms, which the Holy Spirit directed them to ſing, as peculiarly adapted to the purpoſe of adminiſtering that correction or inſtruction, which the caſe of the church then required; or ſome other ſong which was immediately ſuggeſted by the Holy Spirit, and which they were immediately directed to deliver with ſuch modulations of the voice as are called ſinging.

It is to be obſerved, in the firſt place, that this cannot be conſidered as an inſtance of dictating a pſalm to be ſung by the church in her ordinary ſolemn worſhip, if this ſinging was, as it ſeems to have been, ſuch propheſying as that which is mentioned in 1 Sam. x. 5. in which none joined but the company of the prophets, or ſuch as were under immediate inſpiration. According to Tertullian's account of the remains of this gift in the chriſtian church when he wrote, only one ſeems to have ſung at once. *Poſt aquam manualem et lumina, ut quiſque de ſcripturis ſanctis vel de proprio ingenio poteſt, provocatur in medium deo canere:* That is, "After water for their hands and lights were brought, "every one," (not of the whole congregation ſurely, but of ſuch as were eſteemed to be, in ſome meaſure, poſſeſt of the gift of propheſying) "is called upon to ſing publicly to "God, ſomething either out of the holy ſcriptures, or of "his own compoſition." If it ſhould be ſuppoſed, that ſome of the pſalms or ſongs, thus delivered, were new ones, yet it will not neceſſarily follow, that ſuch were then ſung by the church in her ordinary ſolemn worſhip: For it is one thing to have a new pſalm to be ſung by the prophet himſelf in the exerciſe of his extraordinary gift, and another thing, to have a new pſalm, or to dictate it, in order to be ſung by the whole church in her ordinary ſolemn worſhip. That the New Teſtament prophets might poſſibly have new pſalms for the former purpoſe, is allowed; but that there is ſufficient evidence of their having any for the latter purpoſe is denied.

In the next place, we obſerve, that the circumſtance of the prophets, or perſons endued with extraordinary gifts, having uttered pſalms which are not contained in the holy ſcriptures, will not warrant others, who have no ſuch gifts, to dictate pſalms to be ſung in our ordinary ſolemn worſhip. For it is a maxim abſolutely neceſſary to the right underſtanding

standing of the scriptures, that what is therein recorded to have been done by virtue of an extraordinary gift, is, when taken singly or by itself, no proper warrant for any thing in our ordinary worship or practice; nor is it at all to be imitated, except we have a warrant for it in some other place of scripture. Unless this be allowed, we may pretend to have a warrant for hiding a girdle in the hole of a rock, or for eating a book, after the example of Jeremiah and Ezekiel; and for many other extravagancies. Unless we adhere to this maxim, the plea of Quakers and other enthusiasts, from the exercises described in this chapter, must be admitted, to the utter subversion of the institution of a gospel ministry. But if this maxim be adhered to, then we will find nothing in the text under consideration to justify the dictating of psalms for the solemn worship of the church, by any man destitute of the extraordinary gifts, of which the apostle is here treating; for it cannot be denied, that the having or uttering of a psalm meant in the text, was by virtue of an extraordinary and miraculous gift. But if it be alleged, that our warrant to imitate the exercise of that gift in this matter, is in some other place of scripture, then the pretended warrant for it in this place is given up; the thing, which, in that case, is pre-supposed, being the very thing in question.

Objection. "We cannot, indeed, reason from the existence of this spiritual gift in the first ages of christianity, "to the existence of it now. From the necessity of it then "we cannot infer that it is necessary now. Nevertheless the "duty performed by the help of this gift, which was then, "but not now, necessary, is in every respect of a common "and ordinary nature."

Answer. As the gift itself was, so were the peculiar acts of it: If the former is not necessary now, neither are the latter; the gift being for the sake of the peculiar acts thereof. That the having or uttering of a psalm in the way of prophesying, was by virtue of an extraordinary gift, is not denied. That it is a peculiar act of that gift, can as little be denied, unless it could be shewn from some other place of scripture, that it might proceed from another cause; and then the proof would be from that other place, not from this.

The

The objector says, the duty performed by the help of this gift, is, in every respect, of a common and ordinary nature. But how knows the objector, that it is so? There is no such thing to be found in the text under consideration. If it had been said, that a psalm was dictated to be sung in the ordinary solemn worship of the Corinthians; if it had been the act of the prophets acting as the ordinary pastors of the church, and not by virtue of an extraordinay gift; if these things had been expressed, or deducible by necessary consequence from what is expressed, there would have been reason to look upon it as an example of an ordinary duty. But the case is far otherwise. We have no more reason, from any thing in the text, to consider the having or uttering of a psalm in the way of prophecy, as a common and ordinary duty, than we have to consider the having of *a revelation* in that light. Both evidently arise from the extraordinary gifts belonging peculiarly to an extraordinary office, which has long ago ceased in the church. It is true, some of the particulars, here mentioned, are allowed to be ordinary duties of the pastors of the church; as the having of *a doctrine* or *an interpretation*. But then these are no other than such duties as might be performed by the prophets acting, not as prophets, nor by virtue of their extraordinary gifts, but as ordinary teachers in the church. That this was the case with their having a psalm is true, if it only means their giving forth one of the psalms recorded in scripture; but not at all true, if it means what the objector contends for, that is, the dictating of new psalms.

OBJECTION. "What is it that was of an extraordinary "nature in the case referred to? Was it the exercise of "singing praise? No; this is an ordinary duty? Was it "the matter of their songs? This was such as was suited "to the gospel-dispensation then existing; and therefore "such as will be suitable to it, as long as it shall continue. "The only extraordinary thing in the case under consider- "ation, is the spiritual gift, or the extraordinary manner "in which they were furnished with their songs of praise."

ANSWER. Here the objector distinguishes between what is ordinary and what is extraordinary. But what he says can make nothing for his purpose, unless he means, that the dictating of psalms to be sung in the solemn worship of the church

church belongs to the ordinary duty of the church. This he does not pretend to find in the text, though it was the very thing he meant to prove by it. So that hereby, according to him, in order prove, by the text, that the dictating of pſalms for the ſolemn worſhip of the church is an ordinary duty, we muſt firſt allow, upon ſome other grounds, that it is an ordinary duty; that is, the text will prove the point, if the point itſelf be already admitted upon other grounds.

As to the diſtinction itſelf, it is readily granted. We are agreed, that ſinging is an ordinary duty of the church; and, alſo, that the matter ſung ſhould be ſuited to the goſpel-diſpenſation.* But we cannot agree to his ſuppoſition, that the ſongs which the prophets are here ſaid to have or ſing, were thoſe with which the church was then furniſhed for her ordinary ſolemn worſhip: 1. Becauſe this ſinging appears to have been peculiar to the prophets, like that in 1 Sam. x. as has been already obſerved. 2. Becauſe we have no proof that ever a ſong dictated by a New Teſtament prophet, was actually ſung in the ordinary worſhip of the chriſtian church. 3. Becauſe, if their compoſitions had been ſung, they would have been preſerved and committed to writing; and having been given by inſpiration, they would have belonged to the canon of ſcripture.

Objection. "All divine diſcoveries, when firſt made, "were ſuch as had not been known or in uſe before. "Therefore, becauſe they were once new, and diſcovered, "too, in an extraordinary manner, by immediate inſpira-"tion, muſt we conclude, that they are not to be of com-"mon uſe and as a ſtandard directory. We muſt then "throw aſide all divine revelation. The matter of the firſt "chriſtian

* It may not be amiſs to offer a remark on an expreſſion here uſed by the objector. He ſays, that the only extraordinary thing in the caſe was, "the ſpiritual gift, or extraordinary manner in "which the church was furniſhed with ſongs of praiſe." He ought to have diſtinguiſhed between *the gift by which*, and the manner in which the church was furniſhed with ſongs. The manner, he allows, as well as the gift, was extraordinary. But this manner, according to him, is the dictating of new pſalms. Thus, he allows the dictating of new pſalms to be extraordinary, in oppoſition to his own hypotheſis, that it is an ordinary duty.

" chriſtian ſongs, then, though communicated in an extraor-
" dinary way, was not of a temporary nature. It was ſuch
" as the New Teſtament, afterwards completed, contains at
" large; and which is deſigned for ordinary uſe in
" praiſing, praying, and preaching to the end of time."

ANSWER. This peculiar exerciſe was ſaid, in the Diſcourſe on Singing Pſalms, to be extraordinary; not becauſe the divine will concerning it was newly revealed at that time; or becauſe it was communicated in an extraordinary way, or by inſpiration; but becauſe this exerciſe was revealed as peculiar to perſons of ſuch a deſcription, namely, to prophets, or perſons endued with thoſe extraordinary gifts, which were to ceaſe with or ſoon after the apoſtolic age. It would be a ridiculous concluſion, indeed, that the ſcripture-revelations are not of common uſe, or to be regarded as a ſtanding directory, becauſe they were once new and delivered in an extraordinary way. But who can ſee what this concluſion has to do with our aſſerting, that a certain practice, being the peculiar exerciſe of an extraordinary gift, was to ceaſe with the gift itſelf; and that the recording of that practice, like the recording of other miracles, may be uſeful and neceſſary for the church, till the end of time, though the practice itſelf be limited to a particular period.

What the objector ſays about the matter of the firſt chriſtian ſongs not being of a temporary nature, is nothing to his purpoſe; for this does not hinder the manner of the New Teſtament prophets, in delivering ſongs extempore and in public aſſemblies, (whatever was the matter of theſe ſongs) from being temporary. We are ſure that much of the matter of the immediate revelations which were made to the prophets was not of a temporary nature; yet the manner of communicating that matter by ſuch revelations was undoubtedly of a temporary nature.

With reſpect to the inſinuation (which we meet with, at every turn, in the writings of our opponents) that the word is to be uſed no otherwiſe in ſinging pſalms, than in prayer or preaching, it has been conſidered already. Surely, a little reflection will convince a ſerious reader, that our prayers muſt always be conſidered as our own language, and as applicable to our preſent caſe, while many pſalms or hymns, which are warrantably ſung; do not admit that

conſideration.

consideration. Hence we may be limited in singing, though not in prayer, to a certain form of words.

Upon the whole, with respect to the passage under consideration, it is evident, that no man, who pretends to make psalms for the solemn worship of the church, without the extraordinary gifts here treated of, can, with any colour of reason, attempt to justify his pretension from what is here said of the prophets; also, that there is nothing here that countenances the singing in our solemn worship, of any psalms or hymns whatever, which are not found in the sacred scriptures.

Objection. "As to singing other words than those of "the inspired songs, the reader is desired to cast his eye on "Luke xix. 37, 38. where we are informed, that, when "Christ rode into Jerusalem on an ass's colt, *the whole "multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with "a loud voice, for all the mighty works which they had seen, "saying, Blessed be the King who cometh in the name of the "Lord; peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.* Mark in "his xith chap. 9th and 10th verses, records some more "particulars of this song, thus, *They cried, &c.* This was "certainly an act of social worship; yet the words used are "different from any inspired song. Again, Acts iv. 23, 24. "Peter, John and their company, sung a song of praise, in "which there is a reference to two verses of the 2d psalm, "and which might teach christians how to form their songs. "They introduce two verses of David's; but not an exact "literal translation. And, to mention no more, John has "recorded two songs, which should serve as a model of "christian psalmody to the end of the world, Rev. i. 5, 6. "and v. 9, 10." *

Answer. The account we have of the acclamations of the multitude, upon our Saviour's entrance into Jerusalem, is allowed to be an instance of social worship; but not of that ordinary social worship which continues in the church, and which the writer of the Discourse on Singing Psalms manifestly intended, when he spoke of singing in social worship. The manner of it was singular and extraordinary, suitable to the singular and extraordinary occasion, namely, our

* An Examination, &c. pag. 38, 39, 105.

Saviour's entrance into Jeruſalem, as foretold by the prophet Zechariah.* The exerciſe, here deſcribed, is not that of people regularly aſſembled for the purpoſe of joining in religious worſhip; but an exerciſe into which a multitude, come together unexpectedly, were ſuddenly and rapturouſly ſurprized. If there was no example of ſinging an inſpired pſalm, neither was there an example of ſinging any other hymn made beforehand. They all ſpoke at once, as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt; and, under his immediate inſpiration, applied the words of the cxviiith pſalm to Chriſt.

But it may be queſtioned, whether the exerciſe of this multitude can be properly called ſinging at all. It is not neceſſary to underſtand the expreſſion, *they praiſed God with a loud voice*, of ſinging. We may praiſe God in our prayers to him, and in our diſcourſes of him, as well as in our pſalms or ſongs. Daniel was not ſinging, when he uttered theſe words: *I thank thee, and praiſe thee, O thou God of my fathers, who haſt given me wiſdom and might.*†

It is moſt agreeable to the parallel paſſages in the other evangeliſts, that, they expreſſed their joy and praiſe in crying and proclaiming theſe words, *Hoſannah to the Son of David, &c.* When the people, upon hearing Herod's oration, gave a great ſhout, ſaying, *It is the voice of a god, and not of a man*, they might be ſaid to praiſe him with a loud voice. In ſhort, no reaſonable perſon will ſay, that, in the paſſage under conſideration, there is an example of ſinging any other than the inſpired ſongs in the ordinary ſolemn worſhip of the church. On the contrary, the multitude's making uſe of the words of the cxviiith pſalm, ſhews us, that the words of an Old Teſtament pſalm may be properly made uſe of in praiſing God for New Teſtament privileges.

As to the paſſage in Acts iv. 24, 27. it ſeems very ſtrange that any one ſhould repreſent, as an example of *ſinging*, what the inſpired writer expreſly calls *praying*, ver. 31. Surely it is not neceſſary to underſtand the words, *lifting up the voice*, of ſinging, as is evident from the common uſe of this phraſe in ſcripture, particularly in this book, Acts ii. 14. xiv. 11. xxii. 22. As to the tranſlation of the words of the

* Zech. ix. 9. † Dan. ii. 23.

the 2d psalm, it is the same which we have in the Septuagint, and is without doubt exactly literal. The Greek words, which are rendered, gathered together, certainly correspond exactly with the Hebrew verb and adverb. The Hebrew preterites answer to the Greek aorists. They are both often rendered in the present tense.

With respect to the passages in the first and fifth chapters of the Revelation, neither the one nor the other seems to have the proper form of a psalm or song. The first of them is not called a song, but is such an ascription of praise as we meet with in many parts of scripture, which have neither the name nor form of psalms, 1 Tim. i. 17. Jude 24, 25. The other passage from the Revelation is part of a divine allegory; and it would be manifestly absurd to regulate the outward form of our worship by the literal and grammatical sense of it. The words which John represents the four beasts and the twenty-four elders as uttering, in their new song, may be considered as expressing the scope and principal subject of their songs in general, rather than as exhibiting the form of a particular song. The words, *Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood*, represent what every believer truly sings of in singing the scripture-songs. For such passages as the following can never be sung according to the full extent of their meaning, without a believing regard to redemption by the blood of Jesus: Psal. xxxi. 5. *Into thine hand I commit my spirit: Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.* lxxi. 23. *My lips shall greatly rejoice, when I sing unto thee: And my soul which thou hast redeemed:* ciii. 2, 3, 4. *Bless the Lord, O my soul; and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction.* The representation of the four beasts and twenty-four elders as saying, that they were *redeemed out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation*, intimates, that the church of Christ, which celebrates the praises of his redeeming love in singing the psalms, was to be gathered out of all the various nations of the world, Psal. cxlvii. 2. *He gathered together the outcasts of Israel.* cvii. 3. *He gathered them out of the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.* They are also represented as saying, *Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall*

shall reign for ever; according to Pſal. cxiii. 7, 8. *He raiſeth up the poor out of the duſt, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill; that he may ſet him with princes, even with the princes of his people.* clxviii. 14. *He alſo exalteth the horn of his people, the praiſe of all his ſaints, even of the children of Iſrael, a people near unto him.* Pſal. cxlix. 6, 7, 8, 9. *Let the high praiſes of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged ſword in their hand, to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and puniſhment upon the people: To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron: To execute upon them the judgment written. This honour hath his ſaints.* cxxxii. 12. *Their children alſo ſhall ſit upon thy throne for evermore.*

Thus we ſee how vainly men attempt to find a warrant in ſcripture for ſinging any other than the inſpired ſongs in the ordinary ſolemn worſhip of the church.

SECT. II. *Whether the Variety of the Scripture-ſongs be ſufficient to anſwer the purpoſe of Singing in Solemn Worſhip.*

THE ſecond argument againſt the ſinging of any other than the ſcripture-pſalms in ſolemn worſhip, ariſes from the extent and variety of theſe pſalms being ſufficient for that purpoſe. If ſome of the pſalms be in a very ſublime ſtrain, as the xviiith and civth, the ſtrain of others is more plain and ſimple, as the xxvth and xxxviith. If many of them reſpect the caſe of the church, as the lxth, lxxivth, lxxviith, there is a ſtill greater part of them that reſpect perſonal caſes. So plainly and abundantly do the pſalms teſtify of Chriſt, that "from them, (ſays Witſius) may be learned the "moſt part of thoſe things which are to be held concerning "his perſon, offices, ſtates and benefits. And a great many "paſſages of the pſalms, adds he, pertaining to theſe ſubjects, are frequently, in the New Teſtament, alleged by "Chriſt and his apoſtles, not in the way of an elegant alluſion, but for the ſolid proof and confirmation of the doctrines which they delivered.*" "This book," ſays Junius and Tremellius, "is an epitome of the Old Teſtament, a looking-glaſs of the grace of God, a complete "anatomy of human nature: It abounds with inſtruction "concerning

* Witſius de Prophetis, lib. i. cap. xviii.

" concerning the promises of God, concerning his works " of grace towards his own people—of severity towards " his enemies—and of inviolable faithfulness towards all: " also concerning our faith in his promises; concerning our " obedience; concerning our infirmities, patience, constan- " cy, and deliverances in adversity; concerning the right " use of benefits, and thanksgiving in prosperity; and in " general, concerning our whole duty towards God, and his " faithfulness towards us in Christ; of whom the most ele- " gant and illustrious prophecies are here every where in- " terspersed, for the confirmation and consolation of the " church." These representations of the book of psalms shew, that Luther had reason to call it his *little bible*.

Such was the judgment of these eminent lights of the church concerning the book of psalms, resulting from a most accurate study of them, and from a solid experience of the use and application of them in the various trying situations in which the Lord was pleased to exercise their faith and patience.

Objection. " If the scripture-system of psalms con- " tains all these things, undoubtedly there can be no need " of any other scripture: It will answer every purpose " of doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in right- " eousness, for the perfecting of the man of God."

Answer. The representation of a doctrine or duty may be sufficient for the purpose of psalmody, that would not be sufficient for all that instruction of those that are ignorant of it; for all that conviction of those that deny it, and for all that farther illumination of those who have begun to know it, which the Holy Spirit designs by more largely insisting upon it in other places of scripture. The concise mention of a doctrine in the psalms, does not supersede the necessity of that full explication, and of those various lights in which it is placed, in the other sacred books. It is possible to have the idea of a poem on the late war between Britain and America so complete, that there would not be one of the scenes or operations, described in the histories of Dr. Gordon and Dr. Ramsay, but would be dwelt on more or less, as the purposes of poetry should admit, yet it would be very ridiculous to say, that such a poem would render the information of these valuable histo-

ries uſeleſs or unneceſſary. As, on the contrary, ſuch a poem, well written, would recommend the ſtudy of theſe hiſtories; ſo the more conciſe repreſentation of a doctrine or duty in the pſalms, is a proper mean of exciting us to ſeek the farther inſtruction concerning it to be found in the other parts of ſcripture.

OBJECTION. "The writer of the Diſcourſe on Singing "Pſalms ſhould have deſcended to particulars, and pointed "to places where every article of doctrine, ſpiritual exer- "ciſe, &c. &c. contained in the whole compaſs of revela- "tion, is to be found in the ſcripture-pſalmody, or have "produced ſome text of ſcripture to ſupport it. When he "undertakes to do this, I will ſhew him many ſcripture- "doctrines which are not contained in it."

ANSWER. When the objector ſays the ſcripture-ſongs are imperfect, and that ſome point of chriſtian doctrine or experience, which ought to be in the pſalms we ſing in ſolemn worſhip, is not to be found in that ſyſtem, it is ſurely incumbent on him to declare what that point is; and not leave others to form conjectures about what it may be. Enough has been ſaid to ſhew, in general, that the peculiar doctrine of the goſpel about the way of ſalvation through a Redeemer, is contained in the pſalms. For particulars we muſt refer to Calvin, Mollerus, Ainſworth and other judicious commentators.

The objector boaſts, that he will ſhew many ſcripture-doctrines, that are not contained in the ſcripture-pſalms. But when he ſpecifies any one article of faith, concerning the nature and perfections of God, concerning the covenant of grace, or concerning his dealings with his church and people, or their exerciſe towards him, aſſerting that it is neither contained in the expreſs words of any ſcripture-ſong, nor deducible therefrom by neceſſary conſequence, his miſtake will then be eaſily evinced.

OBJECTION. "The new favours received from God, "ſhould be with us, "as they were with the Jews of old, "continually the ſubject of new ſongs; and the very mi- "nute circumſtances of the preſent providence ſhould be "deſcribed in them; their matter, ſtyle, and all their or- "naments being ſuited to the preſent occaſion. This paints "matters to the life; preſents objects as they really are; "and

" and conſequently gives to expreſſion energy to touch the " heart."*

Answer. It is not the deſign of a form of pſalmody, to give a circumſtantial narration of every peculiar event which may be the occaſion of ſinging praiſe to God; but rather to celebrate the divine power, wiſdom, righteouſneſs, mercy, and faithfulneſs, manifeſted in ſuch events or providential diſpenſations. And whatever diſpenſations of proſperity or adverſity we are under, we may ſtill find a form of words in ſome of the ſcripture-ſongs ſuitable to expreſs the Lord's doing therein; to expreſs the admiration, reverence or gratitude, the faith, hope and love which ought to be exerciſed on ſuch an occaſion. It may be farther obſerved, that the ſongs which the Jewiſh church uſed in her ordinary ſolemn worſhip, after the times of David and Solomon, were not ſuch as were newly compoſed on the occaſion on which they were ſung. In Hezekiah's time, the ſongs, uſed in ſolemn worſhip, were thoſe of David and Aſaph, which had been delivered to the church nearly three hundred years before.† It may be added, that the ſort of reaſoning

* Examination, &c. pag. 101, 102.

† Do our opponents think, that our anceſtors, ſo eminent in faith, holineſs and zeal for God, wanted fit words, in which to praiſe him, becauſe they ſought them in the book of pſalms? The following paſſage of hiſtory will ſhew us what hymns they made uſe of on the moſt intereſting occaſions. Remarkable was the danger of Geneva, from the attempt which the duke of Savoy made upon it in the year 1602. That little tyrant, in a time of peace, having found means to corrupt ſome in the city, marched an army, in the middle of the night, to the gates; and, when they had applied a ſcaling ladder to the walls, 200 of the moſt reſolute actually got into the city, while a troop ſtood ready to ruſh in at one of the gates, as ſoon as their companions from within ſhould be able to open it. Providentally, however, before they got it opened, the citizens were alarmed; every one ſeized the readieſt arms he could find; and ſome, obſerving where the danger was, reſolutely ſacrificed their lives to ſave the city and their families. The conteſt was dreadful, and for ſome time dubious. But at laſt the Savoyards gave way; and, a random ſhot of a cannon having broken or thrown down their ſcaling ladder, they were forced to take a dangerous, and, to ſome of them, a deadly leap from the top of the wall. The venerable Beza, was at that time ſtill in life;

ſoning uſed in the objection, does not go at all to prove, that ſuch a ſcheme of pſalmody is warrantable; but only that, if it were warrantable, it would, in the judgment of ſome people, be attended with ſuch and ſuch advantages. But, as biſhop Butler obſerves with reſpect to the truth of chriſtianity in general, "the only queſtion is, Whether it be a real "revelation? Not, Whether it be attended with ſuch advan- "tages as we ſhould have looked for before-hand? For of "theſe, in the matter of a revelation, as well as in the ac- "knowledged conſtitution and courſe of nature, we are in- "competent judges." So we may obſerve, with reſpect to the ſinging of any other than the ſcripture-ſongs in ſolemn worſhip, the only queſtion is, Whether it be a real inſtitution of Chriſt? Not, Whether it be agreeable to our pre-conceived opinions of what is of moſt advantage? We ſhould never forget the danger of admitting man's wiſdom to preſcribe in ſuch matters. As to what the objector ſays, about the novelty and ſuppoſed ſuitableneſs of ſongs made for the occaſion, being what gives expreſſion and energy to touch the heart, if he means that ſpiritual and ſaving energy which the Lord's people always deſire to experience, when they wait on him in his ordinances, we are to beware of aſcribing it to the outward propoſal of any words whatſoever. In this reſpect, it is the immediate and victorious work of God to touch the heart; but this may rather be expected to accompany the forms of pſalms which he himſelf hath indited, and given to be uſed in ſolemn worſhip, than any other.

OBJECTION. There are none of the pſalms which directly apply either to baptiſm or the Lord's ſupper.

ANSWER.

life; but oppreſſed with age and infirmity, and ſo deaf that he heard nothing of all this tumult. Next day, having been informed both of the danger and of the deliverance of their city, he was carried forth to ſee the heads of the enemies ranged along that part of the wall where they had ſo inſidiouſly entered; and then he was conveyed to one of the churches, where the people were aſſembled for thankſgiving. He was unable to preach; but he gave forth the cxxivth pſalm to be ſung. This was his laſt public ſervice. Now the reader may judge whether a modern poet, had he been there on that occaſion, could have furniſhed the citizens of Geneva with a more ſuitable hymn.

Answer. If, by a psalm directly applying to baptism and the Lord's supper, the objector means a psalm which gives a narration of the institution of these ordinances, his principle is absurd, namely, that a psalm or hymn is not applicable to any occasion, which is not expressly mentioned in it. Upon this principle, the psalms were not adapted to the use of the Jewish church: For neither circumcision nor the passover is expressly mentioned in the psalms. But if he mean psalms directly applicable to the subject matter of these ordinances, we deny his assertion. For we sing what is directly applicable to the subject-matter of baptism, in singing such words as these: Psal. viii. 2. *Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength.* li. 2, 5, 7, 9, 10. *Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: Wash me, and I shall be whiter than the snow. Hide thy face from my sin, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.* lxxxvii. 5. *And of Zion it shall be said, This man and that man was born in her.* cxv. 14. *The Lord shall increase you more and more, you and your children.* Again, we sing what is directly applicable to the subject-matter of the Lord's supper, in singing the psalms which describe the sufferings of Christ; as the xxiid and lxixth; and those which set forth Christ and his benefits under the notion of suitable and abundant provision, as Psal. xxii. 26. *The meek shall eat, and be satisfied: They shall praise the Lord that seek him; your heart shall live for ever.* xxiii. 1, 5. *The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.* xxxvi. 8. *They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house.**

Objection.

* The passover and the Lord's supper are both seals of the same covenant of grace. Both set forth Christ's obedience unto death, as the proper condition, and eternal life as the great promise of it. Thus, the subject-matter of both is the same, the difference between them lying only in the outward symbols and circumstances. Hence it appears that, when we argue from the usual singing of psalms at the celebration of the passover, to our Saviour's singing them on occasion of both these ordinances, we are not

OBJECTION. "Dr. Watts' imitation of the cxxxiid "psalm is more proper to be sung at the ordination of a "minister, than a literal translation of that psalm."

ANSWER. The matter of the imitation is either the same with that of the literal translation, or it is not. If it is the same, then it is not true that the imitation is more suitable; for when we say, that a psalm is suitable to any purpose, we mean that the matter is so. With regard to the language, that of the original is the best; and therefore the more exactly a version represents that language, it is the better. But if the matter is not the same, we cannot hesitate a moment about preferring the choice of the Holy Spirit to the choice of Dr. Watts.

SECT. III. *Shewing that the great Excellency of the Inspired Songs, renders it unwarrantable to give any other of Human Composure the same place with them in the Solemn Worship of the Church.*

THE third argument against singing any other than the scripture-songs in solemn worship is to this purpose, That, in respect of the qualities of the scripture-songs, their infinite excellency forbids any other to be brought into competition with them, or to possess the same place with them in the solemn worship of the church.

1. No other songs have the authority of the scripture-songs. No other has the Holy Spirit given under the form and designation of *his songs*. They alone bear the stamp of *Thus saith the Lord*. Of some other poems on divine subjects

not chargeable with "such reasoning as if one was to say, the "promises are different, therefore the conclusion must be the "same." We only say, that there was no necessity of using other hymns, than those which had been commonly used at the celebration of the passover, on account of the institution of the Lord's supper: Because the subject-matter of both is the same: Hence the accounts, found in the writings of the Jews, as to what was wont to be sung at the celebration of the passover, may be made use of to throw light on Matth. xxvi. 30. especially considering the probability that, if there had been any thing singular in what our Lord sung on this occasion, it would have been taken notice of by one or other of the evangelists.

jects it may be said, that they are agreeable to the word of God, and serve to illustrate some truths contained in it. But it can be said of none but the scripture-songs, *That they are formally his word.*

2. No other have the majesty of the scripture-songs. What is said in psal. xxix. 4. *The voice of the Lord is full of majesty*, is undoubtedly applicable to his voice in the word. This majesty of the word arises from the greatness and sublimity of the things set forth in the name of God, and in words chosen by himself to express these things.

3. The words of scripture have a pregnancy and fulness of meaning, which is not to be found in any other words. Though the sense of scripture is always but one determinate sense; yet so large and comprehensive is that one sense, that, though a christian, even of the weaker sort, may come to know, that there is no such erroneous opinion, as some hold, contained in a particular text adduced in support of that opinion; and that another doctrine, reproof or instruction is truly contained in it; yet a real proficient in scriptural knowledge will not venture to say, that he has learned all that may be learned even from a text that is accounted one of the plainest. Hence other songs must be very insiped to a person of spiritual discernment, when compared with the scripture-songs.

4. No other songs can justly be accounted absolutely pure and holy, absolutely faultless and free from all the effects of human vanity, like the scripture-songs. Prov. xxx. 5. *Every word of God is pure.* Psal. xii. 6. *The words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.* This purity makes the people of God prefer the scripture-songs to any human compositions. Psal. cxix. 140. *Thy word is very pure; therefore thy servant loveth it.*

5. No other songs are comparable to the scripture-songs in point of efficacy: For *the word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

Objection. May not the superiority of the prayers and sermons recorded in scripture be an argument against the use of any other prayers or sermons, as well as the superiority

ority of the pſalms or ſongs of ſcripture is againſt the ſinging any other pſalms or hymns?

ANSWER. We obſerve, that the reading or rehearſing of the ſcripture, and preaching, are quite diſtinct exerciſes. Nehem. viii. 8. *They read in the book of the law of God, diſtinctly, and gave the ſenſe; and cauſed them to underſtand the reading.* Luke iv. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. *And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Iſaias, and when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, &c. and he cloſed the book, and gave it to the miniſter, and he began to ſay unto them, This day is this ſcripture fulfilled in your ears.* Acts xiii. 5. *And after the reading of the law, the rulers of the ſynagogue ſent unto them ſaying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, ſay on.* Thus the reading of a paſſage of ſcripture is no preaching. But our opponents themſelves have not yet gone ſo far as to ſay, that the ſinging of ſcripture-ſongs is no ſinging at all to the praiſe and glory of God. Hence it plainly appears, that the caſes of preaching and ſinging in ſolemn worſhip, are not at all parallel in that reſpect wherein they are alleged to be ſo in the objection; it being no better than nonſenſe, to talk of preaching confined to the reading or rehearſing of ſcripture, while it is manifeſtly no preaching at all to read or rehearſe ſcripture.

Enough has been ſaid already, to ſhew that the exerciſe of prayer is diſtinct from that of ſinging, reading, or repeating any form of words whatſoever. There is no real exerciſe of the gift of prayer, but ſo far as the thoughts and deſires therein expreſſed, are uttered by the perſon performing the duty, as his own. And there is no ſcriptural performance of ſolemn or formal prayer, without an exerciſe of the gift of it. It is true, that preſcribed forms of words are ſometimes uſed in the actual performance of the duty of prayer. But with reſpect to this, two things may be obſerved: One is, that, in this caſe, there is no real exerciſe of prayer, but ſo far as the words of the form are conſidered and uttered, by the perſon praying, as his own words, and applicable to his own caſe: Whereas there is as proper an exerciſe of ſinging in ſolemn worſhip, when the words ſung are not, and cannot be ſo conſidered, as when they

are. The second thing is, that though we allow it is better to pray in the way of using a prescribed form than to neglect prayer altogether, or to utter gross absurdities in it; yet we apprehend, that this manner of performing the duty of prayer is unsuitable to its nature, which implies, that the sense of our sins, wants and mercies, ought to suggest the words: And besides, it does not appear to be warranted either by the directions or examples of the word. Some pretend that, when our Lord gave his disciples that form of words commonly called the Lord's prayer, he appointed them to pray in these very words. But if they were, by his appointment, to pray in these very words, then they must have been appointed to do so, either always or sometimes only. If they were appointed to pray always in these very words, then it was never warrantable for them to use any other words in prayer; an opinion which every one will allow to be absurd. But if they were appointed to pray in these words sometimes only; then we inquire, when or on what occasions they were to use these very words and no other in prayer? How much more rational is the doctrine maintained by the bulk of presbyterian writers on this subject, namely, that our Lord's design, in giving that form, was to teach us, not words and syllables, but the right manner of prayer; that our Lord no more prescribed a form of words for prayer in the expression, *Say ye, Our Father, &c.* than he prescribed a form of words for preaching, in the following expression, *Go preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand:* That Luke's expression, *Say, Our Father, &c.* is explained by that of Matthew, *After this manner pray ye:* That the variations between these two evangelists in the words of this prayer, shew that it was not meant as a prescription of the words to be used in prayer. That the saints recorded in scripture, instead of using this or any other prescribed form of words in the actual performance of prayer, are still represented as using such words as the present occasion and the present exercise of their hearts suggested: That the very perfection of the Lord's prayer as a pattern, in which all other warrantable prayers are comprehended, is an argument against the use of it as a form of words; in regard that our weakness renders the specifying of particulars, and our dwelling sometimes more on one particular, sometimes

more on another, neceſſary to the exerciſe of prayer: That, though there is a moſt remarkable ſpeciality in the uſe of this form, as a perfect pattern; yet, as to the words or expreſſions, they are no more ſacred, and, particularly, are no more to be uſed in prayer, than any words or expreſſions ſuitable to that exerciſe, recorded in other places of ſcripture.

We conclude, that, ſince adherence to a preſcribed form of words is as ſuitable to the nature of ſinging, as it is unſuitable to that of praying and preaching; and ſince our ſinging in ſolemn worſhip cannot be conducted without ſome forms of pſalms; ſo the incomparable excellency of thoſe indited by the Holy Spirit entitles them to the preference; nor can the ſame place in that worſhip be given to any hymns of human compoſure, conſiſtently with a due eſtimation of the ſcriptures as the very word of God.*

SECT. IV. *Conſequences of the Scheme of Singing Human Compoſures in the Solemn Worſhip of the Church, inſtead of the Scripture-ſongs.*

THE laſt argument againſt the introducing of any other than the ſcripture-ſongs into the ſolemn worſhip of the church, ariſes from the dangerous tendency thereof.

OBJECTION. "The arguing againſt the new pſalmody "from conſequences, is like that of the church of Rome a- "gainſt the reading of the ſcriptures by the common peo- "ple; namely, that they would pervert them, and danger- "ous conſequences would follow. What one thing is there "which we muſt not give up, if the poſſible bad conſequen- "ces following from it, be a ſufficient reaſon for ſetting it "aſide?"

ANSWER.

* Another exception has been offered to this argument from the ſuperior excellence of the inſpired ſongs, namely, that the words of theſe ſongs, when tranſlated, are not the words of the Holy Spirit, and that they are not entitled to the recommendation of being inſpired forms of pſalmody. As this aſſertion affects not only the preſent argument, but the ground of our faith and hope of eternal life, ſo it has been conſidered particularly, Chap. II. Sect. II.

Answer. Our divines have often shewn, in the most convincing manner, the falsehood of this allegation of the papists. They shewed, that the reading of the scriptures, instead of tending to the seduction of the people, was the only mean of preserving or delivering them from it; they shewed, that misapprehensions of the meaning of scripture, instead of being caused, are removed by the serious reading of it, accompanied with prayer for saving illuminations. They shewed, that the hearing of the word, which the papists allowed, was as much liable to abuse from men's corrupt dispositions, as the reading of it. It is always unjust to charge any sentiment or practice with consequences that are only accidental; that may or may not attend it. But if they be consequences that are of the same nature with that sentiment or practice; if, by fair inference or deduction, they can be shewn to follow from its very nature; the imputation of them is every way reasonable. It is even no more than a necessary explication of such a practice or sentiment; it is only warning people whither they are going, when they follow it. Therefore, the tendency of the scheme of singing human compositures, instead of the scripture-songs, in the solemn worship of the church, ought to be carefully examined.

1. This scheme cannot be vindicated from the charge of tending to the disparagement of the scripture-songs. This is particularly the case with the book of psalms, when it is represented as proper for the worship of the Jewish church, not for ours. It will be vain to say, that this representation respects the use of it in singing only: For, in the first place, a book of psalms, or songs, given to the church for the express purpose of being sung in public worship, is undoubtedly disparaged, when it is represented as unfit to be sung. This book is given to us under the denomination of psalms or songs, as well as it was given to the Jews; it is given to us, without any intimation of the unwarrantableness of using it, as the title directs. The mercy, wisdom, and faithfulness of God, in giving us a book of psalms, is disparaged by representing them as improper to be sung. And, in the second place, the psalms are greatly disparaged by the strange reasons that are given for discarding them as a system of psalmody; for, in order to excite disgust at that

that syſtem, we have been told, " that many of the pſalms " are quite foreign to any other perſon but David himſelf; " that there is not in the whole compaſs of the book of " pſalms, any act of devotion done, or directed to be done, " in the name of the Lord Jeſus; that the ſinging of the " pſalms excludes the goſpel from our ſolemn praiſes; that " David never wrote a pſalm of ſufficient glory and ſweet- " neſs to repreſent the peculiarities of the religion of " the bleſſed Jeſus: That the pſalms lead chriſtians blind- " fold over the river Jordan, through the land of Gebal, " Ammon and Amalek, into the ſtrong city, and thence " into Edom, through the valley of Baca, and into Jeru- " ſalem; there to wait on the court of burnt offerings, " confined to the drudgery of binding ſacrifices to the " horns of the altar, inſtead of offering ſpiritual ſacrifices " to God: That many of the pſalms of David are pecu- " liar to David the king, the ſhepherd, the fugitive, the " Jewiſh muſician: That many of his pſalms breathe ſuch " a cruel and revengeful ſpirit againſt his enemies, as is " quite oppoſite to the ſpirit of the goſpel; that we con- " tinually meet with ſomething in the pſalms that damps " the ſpirit of our devotions, and checks our ſouls in their " motion towards heaven." Surely, it is not ſaying too much, to aſſert, that perſons, who allow themſelves in the uſe of ſuch expreſſions as theſe, forget that the pſalms were dictated by the Holy Spirit, for a rule of faith and practice to the church until the end of time, and are guilty of caſting reproach upon a very important part of divine revelation. Such perſons are running upon the thick boſſes of God's bucklers. May he grant them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth. An advocate for the new pſalmody, ſeems to think he pays a great compliment to the pſalms, by ſaying, " they were perfect and complete for " the purpoſe for which they were intended, that is, for " the Jewiſh diſpenſation."* But how comes this writer to give it as an adequate repreſentation of the purpoſe of any book of the bible, that it was for the Jewiſh diſpenſation? Does not the perfection of each part of ſcripture lie in its being profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction,

* Examination, &c. pag. 66.

rection, and for instruction in righteousness, to church-members unto the end of time? Divine revelation was committed to writing for the perpetual use of the church. Let the reader only compare this writer's way of speaking of the psalms, with the following sentence of the President Edwards concerning them; and then let him say which of the two is more suitable to the respect and veneration due to the sacred scriptures: "The psalms," says that excellent writer in his History of Redemption, "have been, and will, "to the end of the world, be made use of in the church "to celebrate the praises of God. The people of God "were wont sometimes to worship God by singing songs "to his praise before; as they did at the Red Sea; and "they had Moses's prophetical song in the xxxiid chapter "of Deuteronomy, committed to them for that end; and "Deborah, and Barak and Hannah sung praises to God: "But now first did God commit to his church a book of "divine songs for their constant use."

2. This scheme cannot be vindicated from the charge of tending to gross error with respect to the Old Testament dispensation. Here we are not left to draw inferences. This is done to our hand, by one who tells us, That it was his business to establish principles,—the principles upon which this scheme proceeds.* According to him, it is one of these principles, "That it is an error to say, that what we have "written in the Old Testament, as well as what we have in "the New, was dictated to be a perpetual rule to the church "of God on earth."† Which is directly contrary to the doctrine taught, agreeably to the holy scriptures, in the 2d question of our Shorter Catechism: "The word of God, "which is contained in the scriptures of the Old and New "Testament, is the only rule to direct us, how we may glo-"rify and enjoy him." Another principle of this scheme is, "That the medium through which mercy and grace are "communicated, and how the communication thereof is "consistent with the other divine attributes and govern-"ment, appears to be the discovery of the New Testament;" that is, it was not discovered at all in the Old.‡ That the Old Testament does "not lead us to God through Christ,"

* Examination, &c. pag. 67. † Pag. 7. ‡ Pag. 82.

nor teach us really to "rely upon and plead with God his "merits; or to ask and expect every favour we need, on "account of what he has done and suffered in the room of "guilty man, by the Father's appointment."* All which is contrary to the doctrine taught, agreeably to the holy scriptures, in our Confession of Faith, Chap. vii. sect. 5. "The "covenant of grace was administered under the law, by "promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the paschal "lamb, and other types and ordinances delivered to the "people of the Jews; all which foresignify Christ to come, "and were, for that time, sufficient and efficacious, through "the operation of the Spirit, to instruct and build up the "election in the faith in the promised Messiah, by whom "they had full remission of sins and eternal salvation." Sect. 6. "There are not two covenants of grace, differing in sub-"stance, but one and the same under various dispensations." Here we are taught, that the elect under the Old Testament had faith in the promised Messiah: Consequently, they knew the medium through which mercy was communicated to them. For surely the knowledge of Christ belonged essentially to their faith in him. Christ was revealed to them by their prophecies and types; for by these they were instructed in the faith of the promised Messiah. In a word, the gospel of the Old Testament was, for substance, one and the same with the gospel of the New; the same covenant of grace, which includes the whole gospel, being administered under both dispensations; and the difference between them, being wholly and only in the manner of administration. The same truth is taught in that form of sound words, the Heidelberg Catechism, Question 18. "Who is that Medi-"ator, who is, at the same time, true God and true and "perfectly righteous man? Answer. Our Lord Jesus "Christ, who is made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, "sanctification and redemption. Question 19. How know "you that? Answer. From the gospel, which God re-"vealed in paradise, and afterward propagated by the pa-"triarchs and prophets, shadowed forth by the sacrifices "and other ceremonies, and at last accomplished by his only "begotten Son." "Without controversy," says the Confession

* Examination, &c. pag. 79.

feſſion of the Elector Frederic III. Count Palatine of the Rhine, " all the patriarchs and the godly under the Old " Teſtament, when they offered their lambs and other " beaſts, comforted themſelves by faith with this conſidera- " tion, that the Seed of the woman, who is our Lord " Jeſus Chriſt, ſhould in like manner, be ſlain, and ſo " make full and perfect ſatisfaction for ſin." Another advocate for the new pſalmody teaches, that there was no diſtinct worſhip or homage paid to the Son and the Holy Spirit as diſtinct perſons from the Father under the Old Teſtament diſpenſation; and that in conſequence of the ſufferings and exaltation of Chriſt, he is entitled to a worſhip and homage never before paid to him. This doctrine is plainly contrary to that which is taught, agreeably to the holy ſcriptures, in our Confeſſion of Faith, Chap. viii. Sect. 6. " Although the work of redemption was not actually " wrought by Chriſt, till after his incarnation, yet the " virtue, efficacy, and benefits of it were communicated to " the elect in all ages ſucceſſively from the beginning of the " world, in and by thoſe promiſes, types and ſacrifices, " wherein he was revealed and ſignified to be the Seed of " the woman, who ſhould bruiſe the ſerpent's head; and " the Lamb ſlain from the beginning of the world, being " yeſterday and to-day the ſame, and for ever. Chap xxi. Sect. 2. " Religious worſhip is to be given to God the " Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt, and to him alone.—And, " ſince the fall, not without a Mediator." From theſe quotations it appears, that the principle of the advocates for the new pſalmody, with reſpect to the faith and worſhip of the church under the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, is a new and ſtrange doctrine in the proteſtant church. This doctrine, however, is deemed neceſſary to juſtify the ſcheme of laying aſide the ſinging of the book of pſalms in ſolemn worſhip, as unſuitable to the condition and privilege of the New Teſtament church.

3. This ſcheme cannot be vindicated from the charge of tending to deiſm. The objection, ſo much inſiſted on againſt the uſe of the book of pſalms in our worſhip, namely, that the matter of them, as relating to various incidents of David's life, to various paſſages of the hiſtory of the Jews, and to the abrogated uſages of the ceremonial law, is unſuitable

suitable to gospel times, favours strongly of deism. For, according to the principle of this objection, however suitable the record of such particulars, as those now specified, was in the period in which they took place; however fit it was then for the purpose of edifying church-members, and of promoting faith, love and other graces, it is quite unfit for any such purpose now. Upon this principle, the whole Old Testament may be thrown away, and some such writers, as Dr. Watts and Joel Barlow, may compose an imitation of it more suitable to the present time. How little edification, it may be said, can a christian reap from the narrative of what was done by the Jewish kings or judges, in comparison of what he might reap from an account of the conversion, life and death of some Whitefieldians? What have we to do, may they say, with the differences in the families of the patriarchs, with the genealogies, with the ceremonial institutions, and a hundred other things in the Old Testament? An opinion which thus carries in it, that something else might answer the end for which the scriptures were given, better than the scriptures themselves, is quite inconsistent with the belief of their being the word of God. Now the scriptures were given for the edification of the souls of men in faith, holiness and comfort, unto the end of time; 2 Tim. iii. 16. Rom. xv. 4. Again, in support of this scheme, we have been taught, that the words of the scriptures in a translation, are no more the words of the Holy Ghost or the inspired form of scripture, than English is Hebrew or Greek, that is, not at all. Consequently, such as read the scriptures in a translation, have none of the words, nothing of the form of that revelation which God hath given us. Now this is the very thing which a deist says, we have not. He will allow, that whatever truth is in the book we call the bible ought to be believed: He professes to have as much regard to truth, wherever he can find it, as any man. What formally constitutes deism, is not the denial of particular doctrines contained in the bible, but the denial of the communication of these doctrines in the words of the Holy Spirit. If it be said, that what is denied by the scheme in question, is only the divinity of the scriptures as exhibited in a translation; We answer, that this is surely a most tremendous affair,

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as it deprives the bulk of professing christians of divine revelation as such, making it no better to them, in point of authority, than the writings of Xenophon or Plato; for it is our duty to receive the truth contained in them, because they are truths; and our duty with respect to the bible, when divested of its inspired form, (which lies in the words of it being the very words of God) can be no more. But this is not all; for, the form of the bible which we have in our translation, and which the new scheme treats as a thing which there is no harm in altering or diminishing at men's pleasure, and as a thing to be received so far as it is thought proper or suitable, includes in it the particular sort of discourse that is employed in any part of scripture, the method, the metaphors, the similies, which cannot be denied to be the same, in a just translation, that they are in the original. Whoever is the author of the original is the author of these. So that when the abettors of the new scheme of psalmody, represent these particulars (which undoubtedly belong to the form of the scriptures) as not given by inspiration, they deny that the original was so given, or, in other words, that we have any divine revelation at all. Many that are attached to that scheme, we allow, have no such thought; but nothing is more common than for persons to be blind to the nature and tendency of the snare wherein they are entangled.

4. This scheme cannot be vindicated from the charge of tending to hinder a desirable uniformity in the worship of God. In no part of religious worship did there seem to be a clearer ground for uniformity in the worship of God among christians, than in this of the use of scripture-songs in the public and solemn praises of the church. This seemed to preclude every objection among those that receive the scriptures as the word of God. But we are deprived of this agreeable prospect by the new scheme of psalmody, according to which we are to expect as many different systems of psalmody, as there are different denominations of christians; nay, as many as there are different congregations and families. How opposite is this to that uniformity of worship, that singing together with the voice, which ought to result from the common profession of adherence to the same divine rule?

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5. The ſubſtituting of human compoſures in the place of the ſcripture-ſongs in our ſolemn worſhip, being itſelf an inſtance of will-worſhip, cannot be vindicated from the charge of tending to promote it in the viſible church. The pretence, that the ſcheme of ſinging hymns compoſed by ordinary church-members, in the ordinary ſolemn worſhip of the church, as preferable to the ſinging of the book of pſalms, is countenanced by ſuch paſſages of ſcripture as Col. iii. 16. 1 Corinth. xiv. 26. Acts iv. 24. Luke xix. 37, 38. has been examined, and will be allowed to be very vain, by ſuch as exerciſe their judgment without prejudice. But what ſhews plainly the ſuperſtitious tendency of their ſcheme is, that their chief plea for it is, by no means, the authority of ſcripture precepts or examples, binding them to make new pſalms or hymns for ſolemn worſhip: But a profuſion of other pleas are made uſe of. The ſinging of the ſcripture-ſongs is ſaid to be a poor low exerciſe, which would ſink the goſpel beneath the level of Judaiſm. Nay, it is ſaid to diſturb rather than promote devotion. It is, ſay they, to ſing one thing, and mean another; which, to be ſure, muſt be ſad work. But when they turn their attention to the favourite ſcheme of pſalmody, what a delightful ſcene opens. Why, in their apprehenſion, it is "ſo full of goodly proſpects and "melodious ſounds on every ſide, that the harp of Orpheus "was not more charming." For here we have ſongs adapted to our ſuperior knowledge, and to the variety and warmth of our devout affections, the ardour of which was pitifully damped by the Jewiſh pſalms. Here we are not taken up with what reſpected the peculiar condition of the Jewiſh church; but we have ſongs which deſcribe our own ſituation, which paint matters to the life, preſent objects as they really are, and conſequently have energy of expreſſion to touch the heart. The ſongs recorded in ſcripture, and uſed in the Old Teſtament worſhip, were compoſed on occaſion of ſuch and ſuch providential diſpenſations, and why ſhould not we compoſe ours in the ſame manner? We are ſurely in a capacity of furniſhing ourſelves with ſongs ſuitable to our circumſtances, as well as they. How can the new ſong mentioned in the Revelation be ſung without new forms of pſalmody?

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Such is the enthuſiaſtical ſtrain in which human devices in the worſhip of God are uſually celebrated. Their beauty and advantages are painted by an inflamed imagination in the livelieſt colours; while the attention is diverted from the ſimple form of worſhip delineated in the ſcriptures. Men are apt to think themſelves more devout in the practice of ſuch human modes of worſhip, than in the obſervation of the ordinances which are plainly and undeniably appointed in the word: But it behoves them to take heed, leaſt they be among thoſe who are walking after their own thoughts, in a way that is not good, Iſai. lx. 1. 2.

CHAP. V.

Of the Uſe of Muſic in Religious Worſhip.

IN the Diſcourſe on Singing Pſalms, the following propoſition was laid down, *That in the public praiſes of the church, the outward part ought to be conducted with decency and ſimplicity, in ſubſerviency to the ſpiritual part, which is chiefly to be regarded.* The objections that have been made to the illuſtration of this propoſition in the Diſcourſe, gave occaſion to what is offered in the following ſections.

SECT. I. *Whether a joint Singing repreſents the Agreement of Worſhippers.*

IT was obſerved in the Diſcourſe juſt now mentioned, that the decency which ought to be ſtudied by worſhipping families and congregations, is ſuch an agreement or concord of voices as may fitly repreſent an agreement of minds in underſtanding and believing what is ſung, and in the exerciſe of ſuitable gracious affections. To this it has been

been objected, That singing is neither a natural nor an instituted sign of the agreement of minds.*

Answer. It is true, that singing, abstractly considered, or all singing, is not a sign of that agreement; but social singing, like the outward part of all other social worship, is undoubtedly such a sign. Thus, joint prayer is represented as *our agreeing together touching what we ask*, Mat. xviii. 19. An agreement of minds is expressed by singing together with the voice in Isa. lii. 8. *The watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye.* The true ministers of Jesus Christ are said to sing together with the voice, because, as Vitringa observes, *idem sentiunt, idem docent*, they think and teach the same thing. It is true, there may and always will be, in the visible church on earth, some diversity in the views and exercises of worshippers; yet what is becoming and fit to be expressed in the outward part of social worship, (being that only which worshippers should study to attain) is not diversity, but agreement of minds; that they may, with one mind and one mouth glorify God.

SECT. II. *Of the Effect of Music in Religious Worship.*

THE Discourse on Singing Psalms has been charged with inconsistency, because it represents this as a natural sentiment, that poetry and music should be used to express suitable affections in the worship of the Supreme Being; and also allows singing to be a natural and proper expression of our affections; and, as the ordinance of God, to be a mean which he makes effectual in promoting gracious affections; and yet asserts, that though music, as an art, serves to excite natural affections, it is a delusion to suppose that it will, *in like manner*, excite those that are supernatural and heavenly.

In the first of these passages, the meaning is, that the light of nature led the heathens to think, that they should worship the Deity with songs of praise. They had some faint impressions of truth on this subject; but were far from having suitable apprehensions of the spiritual nature of that worship which is acceptable to God. Following the imagination of their

* An Examination, &c. pag. 26.

their own hearts, and thinking, that God was one like themselves, they concluded, that he was pleased, when their own natural affections were excited by musical sounds. They were so far right, in supposing, that prayer and singing praise belonged to the worship of God; but they knew not how or why these services were acceptable to him.

It is necessary to distinguish between natural and spiritual affections. It is allowed, that music is a proper mean of exciting the former, but not *in like manner* of exciting the latter. It is also necessary to distinguish between the divine ordinance of singing psalms and the art of music. Many observe that ordinance, and have their spiritual affections thereby promoted, who are ignorant of music as an art. Upon a candid consideration of these distinctions, one should think it might be allowed, that the appearance of inconsistency complained of, was owing to an endeavour to express the truth with precision, and to guard against dangerous extremes.

For the farther explanation of this subject, the following observations are offered:

1. Very little music, as an art, is necessary for promoting attention to the matter sung, and for expressing our joint concurrence in the exercise. Greater improvements in the art of music may do no harm; but it is delusion to think, that the employment of them in religious worship would render our affections more pious.

2. It is dangerous to represent the word of God and music as means of the same order with regard to spiritual affections. The word cannot be truly received without exciting spiritual affections; whereas music may not only affect the outward senses, but also raise the natural passions to the highest pitch, while the soul is utterly estranged from spiritual affections.

3. They who say, that singing is a proper mean of exciting godly sorrow, because the plaintive sounds, therein made use of, are proper for exciting the natural affection of sorrow; or that singing is a proper mean of exciting spiritual joy in the Lord, because the lively sounds made use of are proper for exciting the natural affection of joy, suppose that the agreeableness of the singing to the animal

part of our nature, makes, or contributes to make it profitable to our souls.

4. We grant, it is an instance of divine goodness, that what belongs to the outward performance of religious duties is, in general, something easy and agreeable to the animal part, and, in this respect, remote from the austerities and bodily labour of superstition; yet if we look upon the conformity of any exercise to the animal part, as that which renders it a mean of spiritual good to our souls, we shall be in as great and dangerous a mistake, as those who consider austerity or bodily pain in that light. This supposition appears to be verified by what we see of both extremes in the church of Rome. The austerities of a few individuals are ostentatiously displayed: But it is manifest, that their indulgences, the pomp and magnificence of their worship, and the far greater part of their superstitions, are calculated to gratify the senses and entertain the imaginations of the multitude.

5. To suppose, that singing is a proper mean of promoting spiritual affections, in proportion as the music is better adapted to the animal part of our nature, is, in itself, enthusiastic and delusive; and opens the door to an inundation of enthusiasm and superstition. Some will find one contrivance well adapted to human nature; others will find something else better adapted to it; and so on without end.

6. It is vain to reply, that singing is a divine institution: For where is it to be found in scripture, that singing is an appointed mean of profiting our souls, because it is adapted to the animal part of our nature, or because there is some analogy between the sensations produced by musical sounds and our natural affections? Where is it said, that one mode of singing is a more proper mean of exciting spiritual affections than another; that singing all the parts, for example, is a more proper mean than singing otherwise? If it were so, it would be the duty of every christian to learn that particular mode of singing; and the most expert musician might be expected to be the most lively christian.

7. We do not say, that a more complex or artificial mode of singing, as when all the parts are sung, is, in itself, unlawful or superstitious. But whenever we suppose, that it is necessary in religious worship, or a whit more proper for promoting

promoting spiritual affections, than a more simple mode of singing, we deviate into folly and superstition. Modes of singing are indifferent in themselves; but the representing of a particular mode of singing as necessary, or even as a better mean of promoting spiritual affections, than another, is to be regarded as an attempt to introduce superstition, and to entangle the consciences of men.

8. With regard to outward order, two extremes are to be avoided: A rude confusion of voices, on the one hand; and on the other, a manner of singing which is too complex and artificial; the attainment of which would require too much application. For it is but idleness and folly, for church-members, and especially the rising generation, to occupy in acquiring the foppery of musical sounds, the time which ought to be employed in acquainting themselves with the grounds of their religious profession, in opposition to the errors and corruptions now prevailing in the visible church. How nearly does it concern christians to *have understanding of the times, and to know what Israel ought to do?*

This section may be concluded in the words of a late valuable publication, entitled, The Christian Remembrancer. "I cannot," says the author of that performance, "but shake my head, when I hear an officer of the church "calling upon the people, "to sing to the praise and glory of "God," and immediately half a dozen merry men, in a "high place, shall take up the matter, and most loudly "chant it away, to the praise and glory of themselves. The "tune perhaps shall be too difficult for the most part of the "congregation, who have no leisure to study chrotchets and "quavers; and so the most delightful of all public worship "shall be wrested from them, and the praises of God taken "out of their mouths. It is no matter whence the custom "rose. In itself, it is neither holy, decent, nor useful: "And therefore ought to be banished entirely from the "churches of God. I am no enemy to music, as an human "art; but let all things be in their place. The pleasures "of the ear are not the gracious acts of God on the soul; "but the effects of vibrated matter on an outward sense. "This may be indulged as an innocent and ingenious amuse-"ment; but what have our amusements to do with the so-"lemn and sacred adorations of God? Would not this be "carnal,

" carnal, and after the modes of the world, and not after " Chriſt ?"

SECT. III. *Of the Uſe of Inſtrumental Muſic in Religious Worſhip.*

THE Diſcourſe on Singing Pſalms having been cenſured for repreſenting the uſe of inſtrumental muſic in divine worſhip as not belonging to the moral, but to the ceremonial law; it appears neceſſary to offer ſome farther explanation of the ſubject in the following obſervations:

1. We obſerve, that the Old Teſtament church was not led to the uſe of inſtrumental muſic in their worſhip by the dictates of human reaſon, but by a poſitive inſtitution of God; Numb. x. 8. *The ſons of Aaron ſhall blow with the trumpets, and they ſhall be to you for an ordinance for ever throughout your generations.* Pſal. lxxxi. 3, 4, 5. *Take a pſalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleaſant harp with the pſaltery. Blow up the trumpet in the new moon: In the time appointed on our ſolemn feaſt-day. For this was a ſtatute for Iſrael and a law of the God of Jacob.* There can be no doubt, that the appointment of muſicians was made in the days of David, by divine inſpiration; ſince they were communicated to the church by inſpired men, by David, Aſaph, Heman, and Ethan. Nay, this is expreſly declared, 2 Chron. xxix. 25. *Hezekiah ſet the Levites in the houſe of the Lord, with pſalteries and with harps, according to the commandment of David, of Gad the king's ſeer, and Nathan the prophet: For ſo was the commandment of the Lord by his prophets.* Hence it is mere vanity to affect to find the reaſon of this Old Teſtament uſage in the natural influence of the art of muſic. Though it ſhould appear, that there were ſome inſtances of the uſe of muſical inſtruments in religious worſhip before the ſolemn giving of the law at mount Sinai, it will not follow that it is no ceremonial inſtitution; more than it would follow, that ſacrificing, and the diſtinction between clean and unclean beaſts, were not ſuch inſtitutions; becauſe they were known and obſerved before that æra.

" It is not enough," as a ſenſible writer obſerves, " to war- " rant the uſe of muſical inſtruments in God's worſhip, that " they are apt to ſtir and chear our minds; for it is not law- " ful

" ful for us, of our own heads, to bring every thing that is " likely to have such an effect, into his worship. Who knows " not, that wine has a similar tendency to warm and enliven " men's affections? And yet it is unlawful to use it in the " worship of God, excepting, where it is commanded, in the " Lord's supper."*

2. If this were not a ceremonial, but a moral duty, then it must be binding on all the christian churches; and each of them ought to use cymbals, and psalteries and harps in their worship; and that, as belonging, not to their occasional, but, as much as any thing else, to their stated worship; and then it would follow, that something belonging to the stated and ordinary solemn worship, that God had appointed to be observed in the christian church, was utterly neglected by the church under the direction of the apostles, and, according to ecclesiastical history, for more than six centuries after them.

Besides, if this command to use instrumental music in divine worship be obligatory on us, we must either be restricted to the particular instruments specified in the command, or not so. If we are not restricted to these very instruments, by what rule shall we determine what, or how many ought to be used in our churches? But if we are restricted to them, then this command has been disregarded, even by those New Testament churches that have admitted the use of instrumental music in their worship; for we know not of any of them that pretend to have cymbals and psalteries, and other instruments that were divinely appointed to be used in the temple.

3. Instrumental music, like other things enjoined by the ceremonial law, is, considered in itself, a carnal unmeaning thing, and utterly unprofitable to the soul. Hence Arnobius, in his book against the Gentiles, justly represents the instrumental music which they used in the worship of their gods as ridiculous. " What is there," says he, " in the tinkling " of brass, that your divinities should be so mightily de- " lighted with it? Is it that, as infants are frightened from " their foolish screaming by the shaking of a rattle; so " your gods, even in their terrible fits of rage, are much

* Pierce's Vindication of the Dissenters, Part iii. Chap. 3.

" frightened at the ſqueaking of your pipes, or ſoftened " to the meekneſs of lambs by the repeated ſtrokes of your " cymbals?"

4. The uſe of inſtrumental muſic in the worſhip of God, which we read of in the reigns of David and Solomon, manifeſtly belonged to the peculiar ſervice of the temple: 1 Chron. xxv. 6. 2 Chron. xxix. 25, 26, 27, 28. Ezra iii. 10. Nehem. xii. 27.

OBJECTION. " Inſtrumental muſic in divine worſhip " was practiſed before either tabernacle or temple exiſted; " and appears, from the inſtance of Miriam and all the " women of Iſrael, uſing timbrels in praiſing God for their " deliverance from Pharoah, to have been a common prac- " tice; otherwiſe we cannot conceive how they, all at " once, could touch that inſtrument in a ſuitable manner. " The company of prophets, mentioned 1 Sam. x. 5. hav- " ing a pſaltery, a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp before " them, is another inſtance to the ſame purpoſe."

ANSWER. Suppoſe theſe women to have practiſed inſtrumental muſic before; yet it does not follow that they did ſo in religious worſhip; becauſe it might be uſed on a civil account; as appears to have been the caſe of the inſtrumental muſic, which the women uſed in the congratulation of Saul upon his victory over the Philiſtines, 1 Sam. xviii. 6. And ſuppoſing inſtrumental muſic had been uſed before in religious worſhip, the caſe was the ſame with other obſervances of the ceremonial law. God's appointment of many of theſe obſervances was made known to his people before the time of Moſes: But it was then committed to writing; and the Iſraelites being formed into a church and nation, many ceremonial offices which had before been performed by the heads of families, were appropriated, by an expreſs appointment of God, to the prieſthood in the tribe of Levi, and limited to the tabernacle or temple. This was undoubtedly the caſe with ſacrifices. In a word, the example of Miriam and the woman in this text, might as well be alleged for the moral and perpetual uſe of dancing, as for that of muſical inſtruments, in religious worſhip. With regard to 1 Sam. x. 5. we have already ſeen the abſurdity of conſidering exerciſes performed by virtue of

of an extraordinary gift, as any precedent for the ordinary solemn worship of the church.

OBJECTION. "Although David instituted a select choir "to attend constantly the place where God peculiarly placed his name, yet it would be a strange way of reasoning "to infer from thence, that the use of instruments in the "worship of God every where else, was thereby interdicted."

ANSWER. The objector might as well say, though God appointed a table of shew-bread and an altar of incense to be in the temple, it would be a strange way of reasoning to infer from thence, that the use of such a table and altar in the worship of God every where else, was thereby interdicted: For the musical instruments, as much as any thing else, belonged *to all the vessels of service in the house of the Lord*; of which the pattern was given to David by the Spirit, 1 Chron. xxviii. 12, 13. We deny that, after the building of the temple, there was any warrant, either from precept or example, for introducing the use of instrumental music into the ordinary worship of God, any where else but in the temple: And if the objector affirm that there is such a warrant, it is incumbent on him to produce it.

OBJECTION. David himself was not in any of the classes of singers that belonged to the temple; yet he represents himself as praising God with musical instruments.

ANSWER. This may be understood of such an use of musical instruments as was peculiar to the prophets, of which we have spoken already: Or he might be said to do what he, as a prophet, appointed the Levites to do; as he says, *I will offer bullocks upon thine altar*, when he would cause the priest to offer them.

OBJECTION. There is just the same reason to believe the Jews might, and did use instrumental music in their ordinary worship in the synagogues and private families, as that they sung the praises of God in them. For scripture is equally silent with regard to both.

ANSWER. The scriptures represent singing praise as the ordinary duty of all the members of the church. With regard to the synagogue-worship, reading the prophets is expressly mentioned as a part of it, Acts xiii. 15, 27. and we may reasonably suppose, from the knowledge which the

Jews

Jews had of the ſcriptures, that prayer and ſinging praiſe, being moral duties, would not be omitted. After the Jews had the book of pſalms in their hands, none of their families could neglect the duty of ſinging praiſe to God, without a groſs contempt of the end for which God had given them that book; or without practically denying praiſe to be a good, a comely and a pleaſant exerciſe, as it is ſaid to be in Pſal. cxlvii. 1. Beſides, it is expreſly declared in Pſal. cxviii. 15. that the voice of rejoicing and ſalvation is in the tabernacles or dwellings of the righteous. There ſeems to be nothing to hinder us from underſtanding tabernacles here, as comprehending both ſynagogues and private families. Our Lord's ſinging an hymn with his diſciples is an inſtance of family praiſe; and, as we have reaſon to believe, that what he did on this occaſion, was agreeable to the ordinary practice of families at the celebration of the paſſover, it is a proof of what is aſſerted by the Jewiſh writers, that the obſervation of that ordinance was attended with the ſinging of pſalms in the families of Iſrael. Such are the reaſons which we have for believing, that the praiſes of God were ſung in the Jewiſh families after the building of the temple. The reaſons for ſuppoſing that muſical inſtruments were employed in family or ſynagogue-worſhip, during that period, have not yet occurred.

OBJECTION. It never can be proved that the Jews had any ſynagogue-worſhip, till after the Babyloniſh captivity.

ANSWER. If by ſynagogues we underſtand aſſemblies of the people that met at ſtated times for ſocial worſhip, there ſeems to be much reaſon to believe that they were in uſe long before the Babyloniſh captivity. "For not only," ſays a learned writer, "does Aſaph in Pſal. lxxiv. 4. ſay to God, *Thine enemies roar in the midſt of thy congregations;* or, according to the tranſlation of Pagninus, *in the midſt of thy ſynagogues*, (a phraſe which Luther alſo interprets of the ſchools and ſynagogues in which the word of God is taught) and in ver. 8. *they have burnt up all the ſynagogues of God in the land;* but the law concerning the ſabbath in Lev. xxiii. 3. 4. ſtrongly implies that the Iſraelites, ſoon after their ſettlement in the land of Canaan, had various ſynagogues or congregations, which they attended on that day: *Six days*, ſays the divine law, *ſhall work be done, but the ſeventh day*

day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: It is the sabbath in all your dwellings. These are the feasts of the Lord, holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. Now, it seems plain, that when the people were settled in the land of Canaan, and were engaged six days of the week in their ordinary labour, many of them could not attend at Shiloh, or afterwards at Jerusalem, from which they lived at a great distance, for holding a holy convocation or assembly for religious worship every sabbath, according to this command. Wherefore such worshipping assemblies being so necessary for preserving and propagating the true religion, it may well be supposed, that it was not long after the settlement of the children of Israel in the land of Canaan, when they began to have synagogues or places of meeting for social worship. The inquiry which the Shunamites' husband made into the reason of her desiring to go to the prophet, when it is was neither new moon nor sabbath, seems to indicate that at such times it was usual to assemble at the prophet's house, to hear the word, and (as Mr. Henry observes) to join with him in prayers and praises. Several learned authors have indeed asserted, that there were no synagogues among the Jews till after the Babylonish captivity; and suppose that the first hint of them was derived from the example of reading and explaining the law recorded in Nehem. viii. With regard to the whole of the order and service of the synagogue, we may allow, that it was gradually introduced after the Babylonish captivity; but it is more than propable, that there were, long before, various places where the people assembled at set times for social worship, or for hearing the discourses of such as instructed them out of the divine words."* But let us now return to our subject.

5 The use of musical instruments is not agreeable to the simplicity of New Testament worship. It was very suitable to the external grandeur of the temple, which was designed to be a figure of the spiritual glory and beauty of the church of Christ. Under the Old Testament, the former was a divine ordinance for directing the views of church-members to

* Vide Pritii Introductionem in Lectionem Novi Testamenti, cap. xlvi.

to the latter. But now these outward shews, being introduced into the worship of God without his warrant, both involve church-members in the guilt of will-worship, and hinder them from discerning the true spiritual beauty of instituted worship. Even while this worldly pomp belonged to the divinely instituted form of worship, it was often a snare, and an occasion of ruin to church members who rested in it, and did not look through the shadow to the substance: How much more pernicious must it be under the New Testament, when it is destitute of any divine warrant, being introduced into religion by the mere will and pleasure of men?*

OBJECTION. Instrumental music is still retained by several of the Reformed churches.

ANSWER. It was rejected by such of them as made the greatest progress in reformation. In retaining musical instruments the Lutherans have forsaken their own Luther, who ranked organs among the ensigns of Baal. The church of England, in retaining them, has forgotten her own homilies: In the homily of the place and time of prayer, we have the following passage. "A woman said to her neighbour, Alas! gossip, what shall we now do at church, since all the saints are taken away; since all the goodly sights, we were wont to have are gone; since we cannot hear

* The great Mr. Pool, author of the Annotations, says, "Better all the organs in the world where broken, than one soul lost; the more enveiglements there are to sense, the more disadvantage to the spirit. To instance in one thing, I appeal to the experience of any ingenuous person, whether curiosity of voice, and musical sounds in churches, does not tickle the fancy with carnal delight, and engage a man's ear, and most diligent attention unto those sensible motions, and audible sounds, and therefore, must necessarily, in a great measure, recall him from spiritual communion with God; seeing the mind of man cannot attend to two things at once, with all its might, (to each) and when we serve God, we must do it with all our might. And hence it is, that some of the ancients, giving this rule, that even vocal singing in churches should not be too curious, "sed lengenti, simpliciter quam canenti." And Paul himself gives it a wipe, Eph. v. 19. *Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, making melody in your hearts to the Lord.*" *Life of Pool.*

" hear the like piping, singing, chanting, and playing upon " the organs, that we could before? But, dearly beloved, " we ought greatly to rejoice and give God thanks, that " our churches are delivered out of all those things, which " displeased God so sore, and filthily defiled his holy house, " and his place of prayer." That instrumental music still continues in some of the Dutch churches, is against the mind of those eminent divines who have been the greatest ornaments of these churches. A national Synod at Middleburgh in the year 1581, and the Synod of Holland and Zealand in the year 1594, resolved, that they would endeavour to obtain of the magistrate the laying aside of organs, and the singing with them in the churches, even out of the time of worship, either before or after sermons. So far were those synods from bearing with them in the worship itself.*

6. It is also to be observed, that the Holy Spirit makes use of instrumental music, as an emblem or figure of what was to be fulfilled in Christ, and his church. Thus, it is said in the xlviith psalm, *God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.* This being understood, as it undoubtedly ought to be, of Christ's ascension, *the sound of a trumpet* here must be taken figuratively. In like manner, the trumpets and harps in Rev. viii. 6. and xiv. 2. are to be understood as emblems taken from the ceremonial usages of the Old Testament. The following analogies between the instrumental music of the temple, and the preaching of the gospel, under the New dispensation, suggested by a very learned writer,† appear to be not unsolid: 1. David, as an inspired prophet, appointed the ceromonial worship by musical instruments; so Christ, the spiritual David, appointed the gospel to be preached to all nations, Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24. 2. The instrumental music did not begin till the burnt offering began, 2 Chron. xxix. 27.; so the preaching of the gospel is founded on the sacrifice of Christ; and the great scope of the former is to exhibit the latter. 1 Cor. i. 23. 3. The variety of the musical instruments in matter, form and use, might represent the variety of articles in the great mystery of godliness, and of the gifts employed in preaching

* Pierce's Vindication of the Dissenters, Part ii. chap. 3.

† Adolphus Lampe in the first Exercitation on the xlvth psalm.

ing it, 1 Corinth. xii. 7, 10. 4. In order to make an harmonious concert, it was neceſſary for the players on theſe inſtruments to obſerve the notes (or what was equivalent to notes) of muſic accurately, and to expreſs them by diſtinct ſounds. In like manner, it is neceſſary for the attainment and preſervation of the church's harmony in the faith and profeſſion of the truth, that the preachers and profeſſors thereof adhere ſtedfaſtly to the rule of God's word, and that they declare the articles of revealed truth, to which they adhere, plainly and diſtinctly. 1 Cor. xiv. 7, 8, 9. *And even things giving ſound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a diſtinction in the ſounds, how ſhall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncertain ſound, who ſhall prepare himſelf to the battle? So likewiſe you, except ye utter by the tongue words eaſy to be underſtood, how ſhall it be known what is ſpoken? for ye ſhall ſpeak in the air.* 5. The different tones of the muſical inſtruments deſerve notice: The ſounds of ſome of them being more clear and ſhrill, thoſe of others more ſoft and ſweet, and thoſe of others more deep and grave. So in the pure preaching of the word, there is a diverſity of matter: Sometimes what is delivered commends itſelf to the babes in Chriſt by its ſimplicity; ſometimes it elevates the minds of the hearers by its ſublimity; ſometimes it breathes the ſweetneſs of the promiſes; and ſometimes thunders in awful threatenings. 6. As to the ſound of the temple-muſic, it was heard at a great diſtance, and recommended by its peculiar ſweetneſs. So the preaching of the goſpel is a moſt ſweet and joyful ſound, which hath already extended to a very great part of the world, and ſhall extend ſtill farther, Rom. x. 18. *But I ſay, have they not heard? Yea, verily their ſound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.* Laſtly, in this conſideration of inſtrumental muſic, we may not overlook the greatneſs of its natural influence, of which a poetical writer ſays,

> Muſic exalts each joy, allays each grief,
> Expels diſeaſes, ſoftens every pain,
> Subdues the rage of poiſon and the plague.*

Theſe

* *Armſtrong's Art of preſerving Health.*

These effects of music might serve for some shadow of the supernatural efficacy of the gospel in the hand of the Holy Spirit, as being *the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; opening the eyes of the blind, turning them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive the forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in Christ.*

From what has been said, we may understand how little reason there is to consider the use of musical instruments in divine worship and the singing of the psalms as parallel to one another. The author of a Discourse on Psalmody represents it as an inconsistency to follow the example of the Old Testament church in singing the book of psalms, and not in the use of musical instruments; to receive the former and reject the latter, on account of their being used in the temple-service.* But this is a gross misrepresentation of the ground on which we proceed in this matter. For we receive the singing of the book of psalms, while we reject the use of instrumental music in the solemn worship of God, not merely because they were used by the Old Testament church, or in the temple worship; but because we cannot say of the singing of the psalms, what we can say of instrumental music, that it is in itself unprofitable to the soul; that after the building of the temple, it was limited to that great theatre of the ceremonial worship; that it is inconsistent with the simplicity of New Testament worship; that it had a typical signification; and that we have positive proof that it was not used by the church of Christ in the apostolic age.

We are also told by this author, that "the argument for "the use of musical instruments in the worship of God be- "ing

* Pag. 70, 71, 72. "We have the example and authority of the "Old Testament church for the use of organs, timbrels, harps, "and other musical instruments in the public worship of God. "Strange! David's Psalms being used "in the public praises of "the temple," is an argument for their continuing in use to the "end of the world. And instrumental music being used in the "service of the temple, is an argument for its being wholly abol- "ished. David no where restricts us to his words, but often en- "joins and exhorts us to the use of his instruments of music."

" ing abolished, drawn from its being of typical signification, " or ceremonial institution, is without all ground." From this it appears, that he reckons the use of these instruments in the worship of God a moral duty. For surely, those standing usages of the Old Testament church in the ordinary solemn worship of God, which were not of typical signification nor ceremonial institution, are of moral and perpetual obligation upon the church and people of God. If this were true, an eagerness to introduce instrumental music into the public worship of the christian church would be more commendable, than eagerness to introduce the new form of psalmody. And indeed what he says of the former, that it was *once* of divine appointment, cannot be denied; all the means of divine worship, which were ever warrantably used by the church, being of divine appointment: while, with respect to the new scheme of preferring the use of humanly composed forms of psalms, to the use of those of divine inspiration in solemn worship, he could not shew that it ever was any other, than what it is still—so much of the froth of human vanity.

The apologies which Bishop Horne makes for the use of musical instruments in the worship of God, have been materially answered in what has now been advanced on that subject. The plea for its introduction, that it enlivens and exalts the affections of men, was considered in the first part of this section. As to the passage from the Revelation, we have observed, that it rather argues that the sort of music there alluded to, was ceremonial; as every good commentator on this book, allows that it abounds with allusions to the peculiar usages of the Old Testament church.

With regard to what he says about combating the abuse of instrumental music in the worship of Baal, by introducing it into the worship of the true God, we may observe, that the circumstance of its being so much used in the idolatrous worship of the papists, is rather against the admission of it into our worship. There is much sin in symbolizing with idolaters in their forms of worship. Mr. Henry on Deut. xii. 4. observes, " that the Israelites are charged not to translate the rites and usages of idolaters into the worship of " God, no, not under colour of beautifying and improving it, " nor were they to indulge a luxurious fancy in their wor-

" ship,

" ſhip, nor to think, that whatever pleaſeth this, would " pleaſe God. He is above all gods, and will not be wor- " ſhipped as other gods are." It is well known, that what the Biſhop here ſuggeſts is a ſtale pretence, upon which many pagan rites were brought into the worſhip of the chriſtian church, till at length the monſtrous ſyſtem of ſuperſtition was formed, which we now ſee in the church of Rome. It may only be added, that profeſſed preſbyterians muſt be greatly degenerated, when they muſt go to learn the ſcriptural form of public worſhip from ſuperſtitious prelates.

END OF *VINDICIÆ CANTUS DOMINICI.*

APPENDIX:

CONTAINING

ESSAYS AND OBSERVATIONS

ON

VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

APPENDIX.

Of Superſtition.

Omnis ſuperſtitio, cum ſit magna pœna hominum ac periculoſiſima turpitudo, honor eſt ac triumphus dæmonum. *Auguſtine.*

RELIGION, ſays Lactantius, is the name of the true worſhip of God; ſuperſtition of the falſe. He derives religion from *religare*, to bind; becauſe man is bound to ſerve God as his Lord, and to reverence him as his Father. Among the heathens, he adds, thoſe who worſhipped the public and ancient gods were ſaid to be religious; while thoſe who, ſurviving their parents, ranked them among the gods, and honoured them with new religious rites, were accounted ſuperſtitious. Hence Virgil ſays,

Vana ſuperſtitio, veterum ignara deorum.

Even upon this ſuppoſition Lactantius proves the charge of ſuperſtition againſt the heathens; for the pretended deities which they worſhipped, were originally men who had been conſecrated after their death.

Superſtition may be defined, an opinion, or belief of a connection, by an inviſible agency, between the preſence or abſence of a particular event or action, and ſome temporal or ſpiritual good or evil, without a warrant in the known courſe of nature, or in the ſcriptures of truth.

This evil abounds among mankind, even in common life. How many ſuperſtitious obſervations are handed down among the vulgar, from one generation to another, about lucky or unlucky days of the week, or of the moon; lucky or unlucky occurrences; about various ceremonies for preventing or curing diſeaſes; about the repetition of certain words by way of charm againſt the attempts of evil ſpirits?

All

All such observances are condemned by the word of God, Lev. xix. 26. *Ye shall not use inchantments, nor observe times.* Deut. xviii. 10. *There shall not be found among you any one that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an inchanter, or a witch.* Jer. x. 2, *Thus saith the Lord, learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain.* The divination or inchantments of the antients consisted, in a great measure, if not entirely, in such superstitious observations as many are still addicted to. No system of philosophy has been found sufficient to root out the popular attachment to these vanities; nor is there any effectual remedy, but the propagation of genuine christianity. Mankind will always be liable to vain terrors, till they be possessed with the true fear of the Lord; and, in their straits, they will be the dupes of every extravagant imagination that promises relief, while they are strangers to that solid ground of confidence in God which the glorious gospel affords.

They who seek benefits by such practices, seek it not from God; for the only way, in which we have ground to expect any benefit from him, is either by means of some virtue which he has put into his creatures, and which belongs to what we call natural causes, or in the use of some ordinance which he hath appointed in his word. But such as deal in these observations have no regard to either of these ways. They use a ceremony which they know has no natural tendency to produce the desired effect; and is none of the means appointed in the word of God. Such devices, therefore, lead men quite away from the due acknowledgment of their dependence on God, to atheism, or the worship of the devil.

But nothing has in all ages been more infected with superstition, than religious worship. In this respect, superstition is called ἐθελοθρησκεια, will-worship; that is, when something is used in the worship of God not according to his command, but according to the will and pleasure of man. The prohibition in the second commandment of one kind of will-worship, namely, that of images, (the principal way in which the worship of God was corrupted in ancient times) includes a prohibition of all other kinds of it. *Thou shalt not*

not make to thyſelf, ſignifies, as Ameſius and others have obſerved, Thou ſhalt not make any thing a way or mean of worſhipping me at thy pleaſure. For though, as that judicious author adds, the pronoun, thyſelf, may ſeem ſometimes redundant, or bear ſome other meaning; yet we are led to underſtand it ſo here by the conciſe manner of expreſſion uſed in this ſummary of the moral law, and by the analogy of other places of ſcripture. Amos v. 26. *Your images which you have made to yourſelves.* It is God's prerogative to declare by what means he will be worſhipped; and communicate ſpiritual benefit to our ſouls. It is only an act of obedience to the revealed will of God, that he will accept as an act of worſhip; an act by which we do what is right in the ſight of the Lord, declining all other modes of worſhip, though they ſhould ſeem ever ſo much more proper in our own eyes, Deut. xii. 25, 28. Beſides, religious worſhip, if a door be opened for the introduction of men's devices into it, will ſoon be filled with ſuch vain and ridiculous obſervations, as tend to alienate the heart entirely from ſpiritual worſhip; as is evident from the examples of ſuperſtitious worſhip in ancient and modern times. The Phariſees made the divine commands of no effect, through their traditions.

It is ſometimes alleged, that, while the eſſentials of divine worſhip are preſerved, additions or alterations in the circumſtances of it do little harm.

We anſwer, that as the leaſt of God's commands are to be religiouſly obſerved, nor may a jot or tittle of any of them be neglected, Mat. v. 18, 19.; ſo the leaſt additions or alterations are to be rejected. The prohibition of adding and of diminiſhing, is, in Deut. xii. 39. put as a ſeal to the commandments concerning the plan of divine worſhip, concerning abſtinence from blood, and ſimilar things, which are certainly as circumſtantial, as any thing belonging to New Teſtament worſhip. It is much to be conſidered, that nothing is more eſſential to the true worſhip of God, than the ſtudy of conforming ourſelves in all things to his revealed will. Nor is the harm of any want of conformity thereto ſmall. It is a maxim in chriſtian ethics, Bonum ex integra cauſa, malum ex qualibet defectu. An action, to be morally

morally good, must be good in the whole matter and manner of it; the least defect renders it evil.

It is said, if we may not do any thing in divine worship but what is pointed out in scripture, then we may not fix on the time and place of our worship, the dress we are to use when we attend on it, and the like circumstances, none of these being determined in the word.

Answer. When we say, that we are not to use any thing as a mean of worshipping God, which he hath not appointed in his word, we do not speak of things that are common to civil and religious actions, but of such things as are peculiar to religious worship. Things of the former sort are not forms of religious worship, and belong to it no more than hands, feet, eyes and ears, the air we breathe, or the particular part of the earth on which we tread. And therefore this objection, though it has been much insisted on, is a very gross instance of that kind of sophism, called *ignoratio elenchi*, or a mistake of the matter in question. As to the prudential ordering of these circumstances in subservience to the right exercise of religious worship, it is enjoined in such general precepts as that in 1 Cor. xiv. 40. and is necessarily implied in every part of instituted worship: But surely this is not the case with any of the additions of which we speak. Without any of them instituted worship may be observed in all its integrity.

The want of due impressions of this truth, that the appointment and blessing of Christ, is necessary to render any usage an acceptable and useful mean of divine worship, is the great reason why so much religious superstition is found among the professors of christianity. Hence it has been a prevailing opinion, that the allurements of fine pictures and music should be introduced into religious worship in order to produce devout and virtuous affections. Thus, images have been called the books of the vulgar. Vicesimus Knox, in his Essays, recommends the processions and pompous formalities of religion, that were used by the ancient heathens and by the papists, as a pattern for the imitation of protestants. He argues for the introduction of such sounds and rites into religious worship, from their effects in war. It seems, it did not occur to him, that God never revealed to men a system of the military art; whereas his infinite

infinite goodness has condescended to give us, by way of immediate revelation, a complete system of the ordinances which he saw fit to be used in his worship, accompanied with a charge not to add or take away any thing. He bids us recollect the temple of Solomon; but he himself had forgot that external pomp or parade in divine worship was one of the peculiarities of the Old Testament worship, which were done away by the coming of Christ. He appears to have wrought himself up to a fit of passion, when he called an adherence to the simplicity of New Testament worship, the zeal of a barbarous fanaticism; as if he would frighten his readers by scurrility of language; while he had not so much as deigned to take notice of one of the arguments made use of by divines against pompous shews in religious worship. It may be sufficient to observe here, that this sort of fanaticism, has prevailed most since the revival of letters, and among those who have had most knowledge of the scriptures and sound philosophy. What charms, adds he, can a London carman, chairman, hackney coachman, fisherman, find in an English meeting or church? If what is read or delivered there be the words of God contained in the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, we need not hesitate to say, that they are better adapted to the case of their souls, and more likely to be made effectual, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to their reformation, than any pictures which Raphael ever designed, or Titian drew. Mr. Knox speaks much better on the subject of religion in his 133d Essay, where he has the following words: "Religion must lose much of her venerable air, when, "instead of the decent clothing of a chaste and honoura- "ble matron, she is represented in the tawdry and flimsy "garment, with the painted cheeks, the glass ear-rings, the "false brilliants of a courtezen."

It is not now proposed to speak of the popish religion, which, as a celebrated writer observes, is one huge and overgrown lady of childish and idle superstitions. But it may be useful to point out some superstitious usages, which, being retained in some of the protestant churches, have long been prejudicial to their purity and their peace.

One of these usages is that of restricting the external exercise of prayer in public to the repetition of the words of a pre-

scribed

ſcribed form. We are far from denying, that there are human compoſitions called forms of prayer, which chriſtians may make uſe of with advantage for aſſiſting their meditations. But we ſay, that it is ſuperſtitious for a perſon who has the gift of prayer, (without which, in ſome meaſure, there are few ſerious chriſtians, and no faithful miniſters) to ſtint or limit himſelf to a preſcribed form of words. There is no warrant for ſuch limitation in the precepts or examples of ſcripture, as we had occaſion to obſerve in another place.

It is ſuperſtitious to lay it down as a rule, to kneel at ſome of the public prayers, and not at others; as if the former were to be offered up to God with more reverence and devotion than the latter. It is ſuperſtitious to direct the ſame petition, firſt to one perſon of the godhead, and then to another; ſince every prayer, which ever of theſe perſons be named, is directed to a Three-One God, the *hearer* of prayer.

The cuſtom of bowing at the name *Jeſus*, falls under the ſame cenſure. The apoſtle's expreſſion in Philip. ii. 10. has been applied to this cuſtom; as if the words *name*, and *bowing the knee*, were always to be underſtood literally; whereas the word name, is often put for power, authority, dignity, or for the perſon or thing named. Here it is to be underſtood of Chriſt himſelf, agreeably to the parallel text, in Iſa. xlv. 23. *Unto me every knee ſhall bow.* Bowing the knee is here uſed, by a metonymy, for ſubmiſſion or ſubjection: It is here aſcribed to things in heaven, among which are ſpirits, which have no bodily parts. Thus the prophecy in Iſai. xliix. 23. and Pſal. lxxii. 9. concerning the depreſſion or ſubjection of the enemies of Chriſt, ſhall be fulfilled in many, who cannot be ſaid, in a literal ſenſe, to lick the duſt. Thoſe who uſe this ceremony ſay, that they do not worſhip the ſound or ſyllables of the word Jeſus, but what is ſignified by it. But it may be properly aſked, why they bow, rather at hearing this name pronounced, than at ſeeing it written or printed? why at the name of Jeſus, and not at the equally emphatical names of Chriſt, Immanuel, Redeemer, Mediator, God, Jehovah, all which belong to the ſame adorable Perſon? Why at this title of the Son, and not at the names of the Father and the Holy Spirit?

The

The dedication, or consecration of churches, was introduced in the reign of Constantine. We have no precept in the New Testament about raising sumptuous edifices for divine worship. Christians may meet together for that purpose, wherever it is convenient, even in the open air. Buildings, indeed, serve for the better accommodation of a worshipping assembly. But when these are consecrated, and considered as in themselves more holy than other places, and as liable to be profaned by the holding of civil courts, or the transacting of any other secular business in them, there is too much ground for the charge of superstition.

The custom, which some have, of taking off their hat, when they enter a church, though there be no person in it, and of bowing towards the altar or communion table, is not only superstitious, but savours of idolatry. The temple of Jerusalem, being built according to God's express direction, being the place which he had chosen to put his name there, and a type or shadow of good things to come, was always holy, even when there was no actual performance of divine worship in it. But this was not the case with the Jewish synagogues, to which, rather than the temple, our churches bear a resemblance. May not the word be purely preached, and the sacraments rightly administered, in places which are every way convenient, though not consecrated? Did God ever appoint the consecration of any other walls than those of the tabernacle and temple under the Old Testament, as a mean of obtaining his gracious presence? Was not the power of godliness most experienced in public ordinances, before there were any consecrated churches; when the apostles preached in private houses, or in the open air?

Another superstitious custom is that of kneeling at the Lord's table. Neither Christ nor his apostles kneeled at the first celebration of the Lord's supper; but received it in that posture which was then usual at ordinary meals. This ordinance is called the Lord's table, the Lord's supper. But where was kneeling ever used as the posture of guests at a table or supper? Even kings have always allowed those whom they admitted to their table to sit with them. The Lord's supper has the external form of a feast, as it is a mystical and symbolical representation of that spiritual feast which believers have with Christ, who comes into their souls, and

ſups with them, and they with him, Rev. iii. 20. Many things uſed in feaſts among men are excluded from this ordinance; but theſe things which were exemplified by Chriſt and his apoſtles, and without which it would not have the external form of a feaſt, are to be retained. Farther, by kneeling in the act of receiving the Lord's ſupper, proteſtants ſymbolize with the papiſts in their idolatrous worſhip of the conſecrated elements, which are ſuppoſed to be tranſubſtantiated into the real body and blood of Chriſt, the ſame rite being uſed by both in the ſame moment, in the ſame manner, exhibiting the ſame appearance to ſpectators. Nay, this practice of kneeling in the act of communicating, as it is uſed with a religious regard to the ſymbols, cannot well be cleared from the charge of idolatry. If they ſay, they adore God through the ſymbols as ſignificant and commemorative ſigns, this will no more vindicate kneeling before the ſymbols from idolatry, than the ſame apology made by the papiſts for their practice of worſhipping images. We cannot allow, that the directing of religious reverence or worſhip, even externally, (whatever may be the inward intention of worſhippers) to the means of divine worſhip, ſuch as bread and wine in the Lord's ſupper, is free from idolatry. The ſacramental bread, as Mr. Rutherford obſerves, could it ſpeak, would ſay to the perſon that kneels before it, See thou do it not, for I alſo am a creature.

Private baptiſm may be juſtly ranked among ſuperſtitious practices; eſpecially as it is often occaſioned by the popiſh opinion of the abſolute neceſſity of baptiſm to ſalvation. The Holy Scriptures teach us, that what is abſolutely neceſſary to ſalvation, is not the outward baptiſm of water which is diſpenſed by the miniſter, but the inward baptiſm of the Holy Spirit, which the Lord Chriſt grants when he ſees meet; and that it is not the want, but the contempt of baptiſm, that is pernicious to the ſoul. But from whatever motive private baptiſm is practiſed, it is highly blameable. The Lord hath appointed us to make public profeſſion of an inviſible and ſpiritual communion with the whole church of Chriſt, by an immediate viſible communion with a particular worſhipping aſſembly, in the ſame individual exerciſes of divine worſhip. Perſons decline this profeſſion, when, inſtead of joining with the particular congregation to which they belong

long in celebrating the ſacraments, they get them diſpenſed to themſelves or their children privately. The ſacraments ought to be diſpenſed in the preſence, and with the approbation of the faithful. Baptiſm is the ſacrament of initiation into the church of God; and the particular congregation, of which the perſon preſented to baptiſm is to be a member, has a right to witneſs his ſolemn admiſſion into their communion. With regard to circumciſion, which, it is ſaid, was ſometimes adminiſtered in private families, the neighbours being invited, (as is ſuppoſed from the accounts of the circumciſion of Abraham and of John) we obſerve, that, though baptiſm and circumciſion are alike, as being both ſeals of the everlaſting covenant, and of the ſolemn admiſſion of perſons into the viſible church; yet there were circumſtantial differences. There was not the ſame neceſſity for a congregation to witneſs the reception of a perſon into the church; becauſe then all that belonged to the nation of Iſrael were church-members: And by reaſon of the injunction to circumciſe every man-child on the eighth day after the birth, it might often be impracticable to aſſemble the church on that occaſion. Hence we do not find that the circumciſing of children was peculiarly aſſigned to the prieſts under the Old Teſtament, as the baptiſing of them is expreſly aſſigned to the miniſters of the New Teſtament. The baptiſm of the Ethiopian eunuch, that of Lydia, and that of the Philippian jailer, have been alleged as inſtances of private baptiſm. But the perſons baptiſed in theſe caſes were, in a manner, each of them the beginning of a congregation; which was to be formed by others being gathered to them. Many things are warrantably done in the firſt formation of a church, which are not allowable in a church already conſtituted. What we mean by baptiſm being publicly adminiſtered, is that it ought to be adminiſtered before the congregation, where there is one. The baptiſm of a perſon, where there is no congregation, is nothing againſt what we maintain.

Nor is the private adminiſtration of the Lord's ſupper leſs ſuperſtitious. Many entertain a notion, that the outward act, in itſelf, of receiving the conſecrated bread and wine, conveys ſome ſpiritual benefit to the ſoul, ſome ſuch deluſive imagination muſt poſſeſs the minds of thoſe who make

make little account of the gracious declarations and promiſes of the goſpel, propoſed to them in their great afflictions, or in the agonies of death, unleſs they be accompanied with the ſacramental ſigns. The private uſe of this ordinance is inconſiſtent with one principal end of it, which is to ſignify and repreſent the unity of the church of Chriſt, by a particular worſhipping congregation meeting together in one place, to eat of one bread and to drink of one cup. Hence, the apoſtle ſays, in 1 Cor. x. 17. *We, being many, are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.* The ancients called this ordinance *cœna* from κοινωνια communion and συναξις from συναγειν to gather an aſſembly; becauſe it was celebrated in a public worſhipping aſſembly. As the benefit of baptiſm, ſo that of the Lord's ſupper is not to be confined to the moment of receiving the outward ſigns; but is to be expected by the believer in all the after trials of life, and at his death. As to the ſick and dying, they are to be taught that they truly eat the fleſh and drink the blood of Chriſt, when they believe in him as their Saviour, though they have no opportunity of joining publicly with a worſhipping aſſembly, where the Lord's ſupper is regularly adminiſtered.

Another ſuperſtitious rite, is that of making the ſign of the croſs on the forehead immediately after baptiſm. In ſcripture the name of the croſs is, indeed, uſed to ſignify the death of Chriſt, the preaching of it, or our ſuffering on account of the profeſſion of Chriſt. But we are no more called to uſe the ſign of the croſs in religious worſhip, than to uſe the ſign of a ſcourge, or of a crown of thorns, which were inſtruments by which Chriſt ſuffered as well as the croſs. There is no inſtitution nor example of this uſage in the New Teſtament. As annexed to baptiſm, it is plainly ſuperfluous; ſince baptiſm itſelf is a ſufficient token or ſign of that which, they pretend, is ſignified by the ſign of the croſs; namely, that the perſon baptiſed ſhall not be aſhamed to confeſs the faith of Chriſt crucified, and manfully to fight againſt ſin, the world and the devil, and to continue Chriſt's faithful ſoldier and ſervant unto his life's end. And ſurely the water of baptiſm is a ſacramental ſign of the blood and righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and our partaking of it is a better way of profeſſing our faith in him, and obedience to him, than our receiving the

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sign of the cross; while the former is of heaven, and the latter of men only. The very abuses and corruptions which have for many ages attended this usage, and which still prevail in the popish church, is a sufficient argument for laying aside a rite which nobody will pretend to be necessary. The brasen serpent which Moses had made, was an ordinance of God for the healing of the people; yet Hezekiah reckoned the abuse, of which the children of Israel had been guilty, in burning incense to it, a sufficient reason for breaking it in pieces. The sign of the cross has been abused by no less idolatry; and therefore it ought to be utterly abolished. The Episcopalians insist upon some passages of Tertullian, and other ancient writers, who speak of this as a common usage in their time. But as to this, we observe, first, that these writers speak of using the sign of the cross on other occasions than on that of baptism. "In the "beginning of any business," says Tertullian, "in going out "or coming in, washing, eating, lighting candles, going to "bed, sitting down, or whatever we do, we sign our heads "with the sign of the cross." And signing with the cross which they speak of as after baptism, was accompanied with the ceremony of anointing. Now, why do they not admit one of these usages as well as the other? Why do they not use the putting on of white garments, the tasting of milk and honey, and the like rites of equal antiquity? In the second place, we observe, that it was not so from the beginning. Justin Martyr, when he is professedly describing the rites of baptism, makes no mention of anointing or signing with the cross. In the third place, the practice of the ancients in this matter ought to be ranked among their errors.

Another corruption, more ancient perhaps than the sign of the cross, is that of washing or sprinkling with water three times. Sprinkling or washing with water once, sufficiently answers the institution of Christ; and therefore some other reason must be devised for proceeding to a repetition of it. To make the number of the acts of sprinkling a sign of the Three Persons of the Godhead, without the warrant of any command or example in scripture, is undoubtedly superstitious. The moment we purposely add any thing, be it ever so small, to the signs of divine institution, we are in danger of the idolatry forbidden in the second commandment.

We may add one obſervation more with regard to baptiſm, namely, that other than the parents ought not ordinarily to be admitted as ſponſers for a child in baptiſm: As the child hath its right to baptiſm by one or both the parents being regular members of the viſible church; ſo they are antecedently bound by the ſcriptures to bring up their child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and they have ordinarily the beſt opportunity of performing that duty. Hence no church is warranted to lay it down as a rule, that what are called godfathers and godmothers, ſhall ordinarily preſent children to be baptiſed.

It is another ſuperſtitious rule, that miniſters ſhall perform the duties of their office in garments of a certain form or colour; as if a certain form or colour of garments were holier than another, or might be conſtituted a ſign of ſincerity and purity of life; or as if it were profane for miniſters to have the ſame dreſs, when they perform the public exerciſes of divine worſhip, as at other times. There was, no doubt, a ceremonial holineſs in the prieſt's garments under the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, as being according to God's expreſs appointment; and as being typical ſigns: But as the practice of wearing theſe was utterly aboliſhed, among other ceremonial obſervances, by the coming of Chriſt; ſo no form or colour of garments can be made holy, or a ſign of holineſs by human appointment, it being God's prerogative to make either perſons or things holy, or to conſtitute any thing a ſacred ſign of a ſpiritual bleſſing. We never find that the form or colour of the garments, which our Lord and his apoſtles wore, was any other when they preached and prayed publicly, than at other times. A particular appropriation of a certain ſort of garments to divine worſhip is the more intolerable, when it is manifeſtly ſuch as had been defiled with the abominable ſuperſtition of the papiſts; as is well known to have been the caſe with the ſurplice of the church of England. In a word, they are chargeable with ſuperſtition, who do not allow the ſame dreſs to be decent in a miniſter, when diſcharging the duties of his office, which would be decent in any other man of acknowledged gravity and piety, when he goes to a public aſſembly.

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It is an inſtance of ſuperſtition for any church to appropriate certain days, to be obſerved periodically, as feaſts, in commemoration of the apoſtles, and other ſaints; or of the birth, the circumciſion, and other paſſages of Chriſt's life on earth. There is much ground to conſider the obſervation of ſuch days as a relict of the old heatheniſm. For, as a judicious writer obſerves, many ancient paſtors of the chriſtian church were too much diſpoſed to accommodate their religious worſhip to the taſte of the heathens, imagining that they would more eaſily allure them to embrace the goſpel by the uſe of ceremonies reſembling thoſe to which they had been accuſtomed, than by adhering to the ſimplicity of the worſhip and ordinances appointed by Jeſus Chriſt. Hence, a multitude of ceremonies gradually crept into the church. But experience has ſhewn, that this policy was not attended with the divine bleſſing. For while men were taken up with theſe external ſhews, they neglected the ſpiritual worſhip of God. "I think," ſays Hoſpinian, "thoſe who firſt "appointed the celebration of the feaſt called Chriſtmas, in "the mouth of December, did ſo, not becauſe they believed "that our Lord was born at that time, but that they might "change the feſtival that was celebrated at Rome, at that "ſeaſon, in honor of Saturn and Ops, into a chriſtian feaſt." "Inſtead of the feaſts of Jupiter and Bacchus," ſays Theodoret, a writer of the fifth century, "the feaſts of Peter, "Paul, Thomas, Sergius, and other holy martyrs, are now "celebrated."

The obſervation of ſaint's days, as the feaſt of St. Matthias, St. Mark, St. Barnabas, St. John, and others, favours of idolatry. The obſervers of theſe feaſts defend themſelves by the authority of the fathers. But the fathers whom they cite, ſay that theſe feaſts were inſtituted, not only in memory, but in honour of the ſaints, whoſe names they bear. "Feſtivitates," ſays Iſiderus, "in honorem martyrum anti "qui patres celebrari ſanæcrunt." "Pro varietate," ſays Jerome, "regionum diverſa in honorem martyrum tempora "ſunt conſtituta." But to dedicate a day to religious exerciſes for the honour of a ſaint, is to give to a creature what is due to God alone. For we ought to devote time to ſuch exerciſes for the honour of God only. Chriſt foretold, that Mary's anointing of him before his laſt ſufferings, wherever

er the gospel would be preached, would be told for a memorial of her; but he did not institute a feast for that end. The apostle, writing to the Hebrews, exhorts them to remember those that had spoken to them the word of God, and to follow their faith; but he says nothing of keeping holy days in memory of them. There is no vestige of such an usage either in the Old or New Testament.

Nor may men appoint any day of the week, of the month, or of the year, to be observed periodically as a day devoted to the immediate exercises of God's worship. It is God's prerogative to appoint such a day. Accordingly he hath blessed and sanctified the sabbath; a day sacred to his service; a day in the highest estimation with all the saints; a day which they have always called their delight; and on which they have been in use to expect and receive the most refreshing communication of divine grace. It is a great presumption against men's holy days, that whenever the estimation of these increased, that of the sabbath decreased.

Six days shalt thou labour, saith God, in the fourth commandment. The design of these words, as they stand in this commandment, seems to be not so much to oblige men to diligence in their worldly calling, (that belonging more properly to the eighth commandment) as to guard them against either adding to or taking from the sabbath. None may take away from the people of God any of the six days, which he hath so expressly allowed them for their own employments. This is not inconsistent with the other holy days observed under the Mosaic dispensation, nor with what is still the duty of the church, the setting apart of days for humiliation and thanksgiving. With regard to the former, God, who is Lord both of us and our time, bound the Israelites to keep several other days beside the weekly sabbath, as particularly at the time of the three great festivals, in which their males appeared before the Lord in the place where he chose to put his name, the passover, the feast of weeks or Pentecoste, and the feast of tabernacles. These days belonged to the ceremonial law, and were types or shadows of good things to come. With regard to the latter, the season of humiliaton and thanksgiving days is not be regulated by the calender, but by a serious consideration of the past and present condition of our souls, and by a careful observation

observation of the dispensations of providence. Indeed the Lord calls us to employ a portion of every day in the immediate exercises of his worship. But it is utterly inconsistent with the allowance of six days for our own employments, for a human authority, civil or ecclesiastical, to bind us to the religious observation of any particular hour or day of the week, of the month, or of the year, periodically, besides the sabbath.

The feasts of which we speak, are contended for as a part of religion and divine worship, as promoting piety and devotion. It is allowed, however, that there is nothing in the scriptures concerning them; and that none of them were observed or known in the time of the apostles. Easter is the earliest of which we have any account in history. But Socrates, the ecclesiastical historian, tells us, that it appeared certain to him, (mihi, says he, certe videtur) that this feast had been introduced by the custom of the private observation of it; because no rule concerning it had ever been delivered to any by the apostles. And, as he also justly observes, what have we to do with feasts or holy days which we have not received from Christ or his apostles? Quid vero ad nos feriæ quas non accepimus ab apostolis, nec ab ipso Servatore Christo? If Christ and his apostles had judged these feasts necessary for promoting piety or holiness of life, they would no doubt, have authorized and diligently inculcated the observation of them.

It is objected, that feasts may be observed, that have been appointed by civil or ecclesiastical authority; as the feasts of Purim, and of the dedication, seem to have been. To this we answer, that before the Purim can serve as an example of the feasts in question, it is necessary to prove, first, that what was thereby intended was religious worship, and not political or civil entertainments. We read of nothing that was to be done on those days which renders it necessary to consider them as holy days. Farther, it would be necessary for the purpose of the objection, to prove that Mordecai, the institutor of them, was not divinely inspired. Mordecai, says one,* wrote all that we have in the book of Esther, to the words which we put in the beginning of the

* Sixtus Senensis in his Bibliotheca sancta.

the tenth chapter. He was one of the hundred and twenty, who conſtituted the great ſynagogue, among whom were the prophets, Zechariah, Daniel, Ezra, Malachi, &c. It is commonly allowed, that theſe ſettled the canon of the Old Teſtament. With regard to the feaſt of the dedication, which had been inſtituted by Judas Maccabees, on occaſion of the purification of the temple, after it had been profaned by Antiochus Epiphanes, we obſerve, that at this period, the Jewiſh church was much corrupted by the doctrines and traditions of the Phariſees, who were called the wiſe men of Iſrael. Judas Maccabees ſeems not to have been directed in this inſtitution, by the Spirit which directed Solomon in building, and Ezra and Nehemiah in rebuilding it. They appointed no feaſt in commemoration of what they had done; but Judas on account of his having reſtored the altar and ſome other things, appointed an anniverſary of eight days, as a memorial of his atchievement. The words of the evangeliſt, in John x. 22, 23. do not carry in them that our Lord countenanced or approved this feaſt. Theſe words only point out the time and place in which our Lord had the converſation which is related in the following verſes of the chapter; and at the concluſion of which it is added, *And he eſcaped out of their hands. We ſailed from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread,* ſays Luke in Acts xx. 6. It does not follow, that the apoſtle and his companions kept the days of unleavened bread at Philippi. Chriſt did not come on purpoſe to obſerve the feaſt of the dedication. He was at Jeruſalem at the feaſt of tabernacles, John vii. 2. after which he remained at Jeruſalem, while theſe things took place which are recorded from the 10th verſe of the viith chapter to the 39th verſe of the xth, during which time the feaſt of the dedication began.

Farther, the obſervation of ſuch holy days as thoſe we ſpeak of, is not only not authorized, but is expreſly condemned in ſcripture, Gal. iv. 9, 10. *Now after ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye deſire again to be in bondage. Ye obſerve days and months, and times and years.* The apoſtle not only forbade the Galatians to obſerve the days, months, times, and years preſcribed in the Jewiſh ritual, but any days, months, times and years, which, like thoſe

thoſe of the ceremonial law, are conſidered as inſtructive ſigns; for the way of teaching by days, as when one day is ſuppoſed to commemorate the birth of Chriſt, another his circumciſion, another his aſcenſion, and ſo forth, is the old elementary manner of teaching which obtained under the Old Teſtament; but which is unſuitable to the ſtate of the chriſtian church, where babes are to be fed, not by the obſervation of days, months, and years, but with milk, that is, with the pure doctrine of the word, beginning with the firſt principles of the oracles of God. The Lord hath given us other inſtructive memorials, or teaching ſigns, even the word and ſacraments. *By theſe*, as the apoſtle ſays to the Galatians, *Chriſt is evidently ſet forth crucified before our eyes.* How great was the advantage of the feaſts under the Old Teſtament over our popiſh feaſts? The former were expreſly ly appointed by God to be teaching ſigns of ſpiritual things; and the members of the Old Teſtament church had good ground to believe, that as long as they were called to obſerve them, the glorious Inſtitutor, would bleſs the obſervation of them for their ſpiritual good; but as for the latter, the poor creatures, who preſumed, of their own heads, to introduce them, could do nothing to make them uſeful to one ſoul, and had no ground to look for the bleſſing of God upon them, they being their own things, and none of his.

Chriſtians are to beware of ſubmitting to the obſervation of theſe feaſts, as having a tendency to bring a burden upon them too heavy to be borne. If it ſhould be ſaid, that they would not be numerous, if they were limited to ſuch as are kept in memory of the principal facts relating to our Saviour. It may be replied, that beſides the want of a divine warrant for the obſervation of any of theſe feaſts, we know not how much they may be multiplied: There is as much reaſon to appoint a number of days to be obſerved in commemoration of other facts relating to him, as to obſerve thoſe that have been already appointed. Why ſhould we not have holidays for commemorating, for inſtance, his diſputation in the temple, his flight into Egypt, his miſſion of the ſeventy diſciples, his temptation in the wilderneſs, his agony in the garden, each of his recorded miracles, and his baptiſm, as well as thoſe commemorating his circumciſion, or the coming of the wiſe men out of the eaſt? The rule of

God's

God's word is a ſimple and determinate rule; but the additions of human deviſing are without end.

The unlawfulneſs of obſerving ſome of theſe feaſts appear, from the falſehood implied in the obſervation of them. Thus, when our Epiſcopalians ſay in their prayers on Chriſtmas day, "Almighty God, who has given thy Son, as at this time, to be born;" and in that on the Purification day, "As thy only Son was this day preſented;" their words imply, that they have a certain knowledge, that theſe events took place on the particular days of the months which they have fixed on for theſe feaſts. Now the opinion that Chriſt was born on the 25th of December, proceeded upon ſeveral ſuppoſitions that are manifeſtly falſe: Such as, 1. That Zacharias was the high-prieſt when he offered incenſe in the temple; whereas he is plainly repreſented as one of the prieſts who officiated in the temple according to their courſes, and by lot. 2. That the time of his miniſtering mentioned in Luke i. 9. and of his receiving the promiſe of the conception of John the Baptiſt, was the day of expiation; whereas that was only one day, Lev. xvi. 29, 30. but the time of Zacharias' miniſtry is ſaid to be ſeveral days, Luke i. 23. 3. That the conception of the Baptiſt was on the 27th of September; a bold conjecture: While the miniſtration of Zacharias was for ſeveral days, who will ſay on which day of his miniſtring the angel appeared unto him? 4. That there were ſix entire months between the conception of the Baptiſt, and that of Chriſt; whereas Luke ſays, that Gabriel was ſent to Mary on the ſixth month after the conception of the Baptiſt; but whether in the beginning, or in the middle, or towards the end of that month, is not revealed. Such are the premiſes from which the concluſion has been drawn, that Chriſt was born on the 25th of December. In any authentic Roman hiſtories, now extant, of the three firſt centuries, there is a deep ſilence of that feſtival. Chryſoſtom owns, that in his time there were various opinions on this head, ſome holding, that he was born on the 6th day of January. As for himſelf, he tells his hearers in his ſermon on the birth of Chriſt, that he had but lately come to know that it was the 25th of December. What account we are to make of the knowledge he had of this matter, we may underſtand by conſidering, that it proceeded upon the falſe or uncertain

uncertain ſuppoſitions now mentioned; particularly upon the abſurd notion of the pontificate of Zacharias. Ambroſe, Prudentius, and others, try (ridiculouſly indeed) to prove that Chriſt was born on the 25th of December, becauſe John the Baptiſt ſays, in John iii. 30. *He muſt increaſe; but I muſt decreaſe.* Wherefore, ſay they, Chriſt muſt have been born when the light was increaſing, that is, on the 25th of December; for then the days begin to grow longer: And the Baptiſt, when the light was decreaſing, that is, on the 24th of June. The Egyptian churches held, that his birth was on the 6th of January. Clemens Alexandrinus mentions other opinions; as that it was on the 20th of April, or the 20th of May. Paul, biſhop of Middleburgh, wrote a book to ſhew that it was on the 26th of March. Scaliger attempted to ſhew that he was born in the end of September, or the beginning of October. Caſaubon, in his Exercitations, endeavours to ſupport his hypotheſis, by alleging the cuſtom of the church of Alexandria, which, at firſt, celebrated the ſolemnity of the Baptiſt, on the 23d of April. They are followed by Calviſius, and others. There is no certainty in any of theſe aſſertions. Scaliger's, the moſt rational, perhaps, of them all, determines neither the month nor the day. From all that genius and induſtry has advanced on this ſubject, it does not appear, that even a probable knowledge of the day of Chriſt's birth is attainable. Thus, God ſeems, by his wonderful providence, involving the birth-day of Chriſt, and the date of many other events relating to him, in impenetrable darkneſs, to have rendered it impoſſible to find any ſolid grounds to proceed upon in computing them, even in the early ages of chriſtianity; that by a ſenſible and cogent argument, he might convince men that ſuch days and times were no longer to be obſerved as a part of religious worſhip.

Thus, we have pointed out ſome inſtances of ſuperſtition, which are ſtill to be found in the worſhip of ſome of the proteſtant churches. We might have added ſeveral others, ſuch as, the ſinging of hymns of human compoſure, and the uſe of inſtrumental muſic in public worſhip. The moſt pious and judicious divines, even in churches where ſome of theſe uſages are continued, have lamented that they were not taken away. Thus Voetius, ſpeaking of

the holy days ſtill retained in the Dutch churches, owns that theſe churches are much happier in which miniſters and people have agreed to take away ſuch a bone of contention, as the obſervation of theſe days have proved. The Epiſcopal church, indeed, repreſents ſuch ſuperſtitions as ſo many "forms and uſages, which may, without offence, be allowed, "provided the ſubſtance of the faith be kept entire." If it is meant, that they may without offence be allowed by the civil magiſtrate; we grant, that it belongs not to him to judge and determine in ſuch matters; nor is the obſervation of the true religion to be enforced by civil penalties. But if it is meant, that the practice of theſe forms is without offence to God, we apprehend they are in a dangerous error. It is as ſure, that God is offended at ſuch uſages, as it is, that he charges us neither to add to, nor take away from, what he hath commanded, Deut. xii. 32. and condemns all theſe forms of worſhip which they deviſe of their own heart, 1 Kings xii. 33. according to their own thoughts, Iſa. lxv. 2. according to the precepts of men, Mat. xv. 9. And there is no reaſon to doubt, but that the obſtinate attachment of many in the Reformed churches to ſuch human inventions in divine worſhip is one principal cauſe of God's judgments that have come upon them. Hath he not divided them in his anger? Has he not raiſed up a generation of atheiſts and infidels to be a ſcourge to them? Have not multitudes in their communion, embracing Socinian and Arminian errors, loſt even the ſubſtance of the faith? Are not multitudes in their communion manifeſtly without any ſavour of the chriſtian religion in their converſation, and without the daily exerciſe of chriſtian worſhip in their families? Every one that has any acquaintance with the hiſtory of the Proteſtant churches, particularly, of thoſe in Britain and Ireland, knows, that theſe human devices in the worſhip of God have been an offence to great numbers of pious people, ever ſince the reformation from Popery; of whom there were many who, for a ſtedfaſt adherence to their teſtimony againſt ſuch impoſitions, ſuffered not only the ſpoiling of their goods, but impriſonment, exile and death.

Of

Of Enthuſiaſm.

These are the ingredients of which Enthuſiaſm is generally compoſed: Great heat of temper, melancholy, ignorance, credulity, and vanity or ſelf-conceit. *Lord Lyttleton.*

ENTHUSIASM, agreeably to the derivation of the word, has been ſometimes taken in a good ſenſe for divine inſpiration, or for the ſtate of the human mind when, under an immediate prevailing impulſe of the Holy Spirit, it is elevated far above what it can reach in the natural uſe of its faculties. But it is now taken in a bad ſenſe; and an enthuſiaſt is commonly underſtood to be one who aſcribes the natural operations and tendencies of his own mind, to an immediate agency of the Holy Spirit or of angels. To guard againſt the extremes into which men have run in their ſentiments on this ſubject, (ſome of which manifeſtly tend to atheiſm, others to a ſeemingly religious frenzy) is of great neceſſity and importance.

It is no leſs than atheiſtical blaſphemy to call the belief of man's abſolute dependence on God, enthuſiaſm. Right reaſon teacheth us, that the ſame will and power of God which determined us to exiſt rather than not to exiſt at firſt, are ſtill the only efficient cauſe of our continuing or not ceaſing to exiſt; that we cannot move nor form a thought but as he enables us; that, as we are endowed with the faculties of the underſtanding and the will, which make us rational creatures, ſo it is the proper uſe of theſe faculties to acknowledge our abſolute dependence on God as our firſt cauſe and laſt end, and to expreſs our acquieſcence in that dependence, by ſtudying conformity to his will, as it is made known to us; and that, when we do otherwiſe, we are chargeable with a criminal defect, and with rebellion againſt our Creator. Let impious men call an habitual regard to theſe principles, enthuſiaſm, we eſteem it, with the higheſt reaſon, the only true wiſdom.

It is impiety to reproach any as enthuſiaſts, for aſcribing to the ſupernatural agency of the Holy Spirit what the ſcriptures

tures of truth aſcribe to it. God having a gracious purpoſe of ſaving a certain number of mankind from ſin and miſery, and of beſtowing upon them the promiſed bleſſings of the covenant of grace through the precious blood of Chriſt, actually communicates theſe bleſſings in the time and order ſettled in that everlaſting covenant. Particularly, he ſends the Holy Spirit at the appointed moment to work faith, love, repentance, and every other grace in their hearts; enabling them to mortify the deeds of the body, and to perform other duties in an acceptable manner. Believers are ſaid to have the love of God ſhed abroad in their hearts and to abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghoſt. He bears witneſs with their ſpirits that they are the children of God. He ſeals them unto the day of redemption. He ſtrengthens them with might in the inner man. He is repreſented as the author of all the gifts by which the church is edified, not only of the extraordinary gifts of working miracles, and ſpeaking various tongues; which were neceſſary before the canon of ſcripture was cloſed; and which have now ceaſed; but alſo, of thoſe which are ſtill continued, ſuch as the gifts of prayer, preaching, ruling in the church. *All theſe worketh that one and the ſelf ſame Spirit, dividing to every man ſeverally as he will.* The ſcriptures afford believers good ground to expect that God will give them what is good in anſwer to their prayers. Chriſt aſſures them that whatſoever they aſk in his name, ſhall be given them: Hence, they are to direct their prayer to him, and to look up in the expectation of a gracious anſwer through the righteouſneſs and interceſſion of Chriſt. The ſcriptural expectation of the anſwer of prayer, is not founded on the abſurd notion of working any change on the Divine mind, but on the perſuaſion that God hath appointed prayer to be uſed as a mean of obtaining promiſed bleſſings at his hand; and that, as he from all eternity decreed that his people ſhould obtain ſuch bleſſings, ſo he decreed that they ſhould uſe prayer as a mean for that end.

It is no enthuſiaſm to look for the gracious preſence of God with us to uphold and direct us in the way of duty, and more eſpecially in the ordinances of his worſhip, ſuch as, praying, preaching, reading and hearing the word, communicating, covenanting. Theſe are ſo many ways in which God

God hath appointed us to draw near to him; and in which he hath given us ground to expect that he will draw near to us. Nor is the experience, which believers declare they have, of the Lord's withdrawing from them at one time, and returning at another, as to sensible manifestation, any other than what the scriptures hold forth as his way of dealing with them. He says, *I will go and return to my place: And again, I will come unto you, and I will bless you.* The Lord the Spirit dwells in believers as their effectual teacher and continual remembrancer. Hence, we look upon it as horrid impiety to ridicule christians as enthusiastic; because they ascribe the seasonable remembrance, affecting views, and abiding impressions of particular words of scripture as indeed the words of God, to the work of the Holy Spirit; or because they acknowledge they have found much relief in the way of consulting the throne of grace, laying their matters before the Lord, and imploring his direction.

It is no enthusiasm to believe that God employs the ministration of angels in preserving us from danger, and in various friendly offices. Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation? The consideration of the presence of the holy angels with us, should be a continual incitement to watchfulness and circumspection in our conversation.

Nor dare we say, that all the extraordinary views which some of the servants of God have had of future events, even since the apostolic age, were enthusiastical. Mr. John Huss foretold the Reformation, in which Luther was eminently instrumental: Mr. George Wishart foretold the death of cardinal Beaton. It is observable, however, that these reformers did not, like enthusiasts, give out that others were bound to believe their declarations about future events, as if they had been equal to the predictions of the apostles and prophets. These holy men, giving themselves to the word of God and prayer, seem to have been favoured with an extraordinary measure of the influences of the Holy Spirit, leading them to apply the general predictions of the word to some particular cases.

Persons, however, are chargeable with enthusiasm so far as they make their experience of the impulses or motions of the Spirit without the word, the rule of their faith and

practice. We are enjoined not to believe every ſpirit, but to try the ſpirits, whether they are of God. We are to bring all their ſuggeſtions to the law and to the teſtimony: If they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light, no dawning, in them. They are enthuſiaſts who imagine themſelves to be directed to what they believe or practiſe by a pretended ſpiritual ſenſe of ſcripture, quite different from the ſenſe which the native ſignification of the words, taken in conſiſtency with other places of ſcripture, bears. We allow, that true believers have peculiar views of the reality, glory and excellency of the things revealed in ſcripture; but ſtill theſe are no other things than what are really ſet forth in the words of ſcripture, according to the true grammatical ſenſe of them. The natural man, as Mr. Rutherford obſerves, ſeeth the ſame true ſenſe of ſcripture with the ſtar light of mere natural reaſon, which the renewed man ſeeth with the ſupernatural, ſpiritual, ſunlight of the Spirit of grace.

Enthuſiaſm leads perſons to conclude themſelves the ſubjects of a ſaving converſion, before they have examined themſelves by the marks and characters of converted perſons laid down in ſcripture; becauſe they have had ſuch and ſuch ſtrange and unuſual impulſes, imaginations and ſenſible impreſſions. In the ſame manner, they are brought to engage or not engage in a particular buſineſs or way of life; becauſe they feel themſelves under a ſtrong impulſe to engage or not engage in it, without any ſuitable conſideration of what the word of God directs them to in the matter. If a text of ſcripture occur to an enthuſiaſt, while he is deliberating on any affair, he is apt to apply it to that affair, on account of its unexpected occurrence, without conſidering how far the genuine ſenſe of the paſſage admits ſuch an application. A ſelfiſh complacency in the frames and lively affections that he thinks he has attained in certain devotional exerciſes, (different from the ſpiritual delight of believers in, and outgoing of ſoul towards the glorious Object of worſhip) occaſions ſuch a protracting of theſe exerciſes as juſtles out other duties. It is a conſtant feature in the character of an enthuſiaſt, that there is ſomething which his imagination, continually brooding upon it, has magnified ſo much, that, for the ſake of it, he diſparages

parages, or even violently oppoſes other things, that are, in their place, no leſs neceſſary. Thus, there are ſome ſo much taken up with inward meditation, that they imagine they are not at all concerned to utter a word, however much the glory of God or the good of their neighbour may require it. Others are ſo much occupied in ſinging hymns, that they neher charge themſelves with the neglect of other duties, ſuch as, that of ſearching the ſcriptures, that of recollecting the word of God that has been preached to them, that of meditating on it with application to the caſe of their ſouls, and that of ſpeaking often to one another of the things of God.

The enthuſiaſt is full of chimerical expectations of temporal benefits, without regard to the means which, according to the ordinary courſe of providence, are neceſſary to the attainment of ſuch benefits; and promiſes himſelf every ſpiritual bleſſing, while he neglects the means which God hath appointed in his word.

Enthuſiaſtical religious affections make a greater noiſe than the true love of God in the heart. The former proceed from a lively imagination, and are often much promoted by the bodily conſtitution: Whereas the latter is the effect of a divine light gradually ſpringing up in the underſtanding; it is a habit rooted in the very nature of the ſoul. The former, being quite ſenſible, and meeting with no oppoſition from depraved nature or the agency of ſatan, always fills a perſon with ſelf-conceit; the latter, on the contrary, is often for a time hardly otherwiſe diſcernible than by the humbling ſenſe with which it is attended, of remaining darkneſs and enmity againſt God.

It is a ſtriking inſtance of the ſelf-conceit of ſome enthuſiaſt, that they account their own words and compoſitions equal or even preferable to thoſe of the Holy Spirit ſpeaking in the ſcriptures.

There are various degrees of religious enthuſiaſm. It behoves us to be alarmed at the very firſt approaches of it. We are ſo far entangled in it as we let our ſenſes, our imaginations or our affections take the lead in matters of religion, inſtead of the ſober exerciſe of our judgment; and ſo far as we adhere to any principle or practice, rather becauſe it is agreeable to our feelings, than becauſe it is agreeable o the word of God.

We

We conclude this paper with an account which an old author gives of two sorts of enthusiasts.

Those of the one sort, says he, call themselves *Dei patientes*, God's patients, because they are the passive subjects of his operations. Whatever they do, they are never chargeable, in their own apprehension, with any sin; for, say they, God does in us and by us what he pleases. They make no effort to regulate their thoughts or affections by the divine command; ascribing them all to the Holy Spirit. They are far from duly considering that the blessed Spirit never works in any man what is vain or unprofitable to the soul, or what is contrary to the example of Christ and the holy scriptures. Those of the other sort, again, are remarkable for their pretended spiritual elevations, for their great swelling words of vanity. The ordinary exercises of christians are low and mean things in their account. They boast of mystical transubstantiation, of self-annihilation, of spiritual inebriation, super-essential union and identification with God; of the death of the senses, and all the affections, of a meridian holocaust in medullary penetrability. Mr. Rutherford speaks of some in his time who represented themselves as all Christed, fully and purely spiritualized saints, that lived not upon ordinances. They speak nonsense, says he, that others more heavenly than themselves may go for carnal, legal, literal men, not having the Spirit, nor able to understand or judge of the things of the Spirit; whereas they are the only spiritual men who judge all things. In the mean time, they know not what they say, and speak contrary to scripture and to common sense.

P. S. It may not be amiss to subjoin to this Essay, some observations on what has been much celebrated by some of the Presbyterian denomination as a revival of religion.

In the first place, we observe, that this revival, if not begun, was much promoted by the ministrations of Mr. George Whitefield, a professed member and minister of the superstitious church of England. "It would be presumptuous," as a candid and judicious writer observes, "to determine "what were Mr. Whitefield's prevailing motives to it in "erant preaching. Charity, which thinketh no evil, will "suppose

" ſuppoſe them to have been laudable. But it is freſh in " the memory of many yet alive, how much his artillery " was directed againſt all teſts of orthodoxy ; with what " warmth he recommended and how highly he extolled a " motely communion of all who appeared to be good men. " To ſtand upon any divine, fixed ſyſtem of government " and diſcipline, or ſtated mode of worſhip in the church, " or even upon ſome very important articles of chriſtian " doctrine, he arraigned as bigotry, uncharitableneſs and " folly." Hence it is manifeſt, that the advancement of God's work, ſo far as it lies in obſerving and keeping pure that form of church government and of religious worſhip which God hath appointed in his word, in oppoſition to Independent diſorder, Prelatical ambition and other corruptions, was by no means the profeſſed deſign of Mr. Whitefield's adminiſtrations.

We obſerve in the next place, that ſeveral circumſtances, ſavouring of enthuſiaſm, attended the revival in his time, even among thoſe of the preſbyterian denomination in this country. Then, as we are informed by an examination of Mr. Tennent's remarks upon the reaſons given by the ſynod of New-York and Philadelphia, for not admitting the brethren of the Brunſwick party to ſit and vote in ſynod, miniſters, who adhered to that revival, intruded into other men's labours. People deſerted their proper paſtors and aſſemblies, to ramble up and down after diſorderly intruders. A new-fangled ſtir was kept up of ſociety-meetings, to make vaunting boaſts of men's experiences of grace, comforts and viſions. Some pretended to form poſitive judgments of men's inward experiences and ſecret ſtates : And, in order to found ſuch poſitive judgments, men and women were importuned to declare without reſerve whatever was in their hearts. On ſabbaths, men's profiting by public ſermons was manifeſtly hindered by the diſorderly ſinging of hymns and the loud reading of ſeveral perſons at once, in the intervals of public worſhip. Roaring, trembling, hideous cries among the people were encouraged by the fantaſtical motions and roaring of ſome miniſters. Men were prompted to reſt on fits and outcries for converſion work. The uſual note of ſome preachers, when many of their hearers cried and fell into fits, was, *Will any more of you come to Chriſt?*

Christ? calling upon others to come and see the evidences of God's work, insinuating, that these shocks were undeniable evidences of it. At the same time, the persons, who cried and who had such fits, were told, that the threatenings denounced were not levelled at them, but at those hard-hearted pharisees who were void of such appearances. The ministers of the Brunswick party, who were zealous for the revival, denied that synods should go any farther in judging of references and appeals, than to give their best advice; and taught, that natural men have no call of God to the ministerial work under the gospel dispensation; confounding the call to the ministry with the qualifications for it. Mr. Tennent's Remarks upon the Protestation Examined, pages 61, 85, 91, 92, 93, 98.

In the third place, we observe, that since Mr. Whitefield's time, there have been, among those of the Presbyterian denomination, revivals distinguished sometimes by more and sometimes by fewer of the particulars mentioned in the above quotation. The revival of the power of godliness is, no doubt, what we greatly need, and what all the people of God ardently desire. But when any appearance in the visible church is called a revival, it behoves us to examine, whether it bears the scripture-marks of a real revival, or not. *Beloved*, says the apostle John, *believe not every spirit; but try the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world.* The scripture gives us ground to expect such marks of a real revival, as the following:

1. A prevailing concern among professors to have the manner of divine worship exactly conformable to the scriptures. Hence a revival which is promoted by setting aside the psalms given by divine inspiration, as unfit to be sung in New Testament worship, and by substituting in their place hymns of human composure, is to be suspected. So is that which encourages church-members to allow themselves in the practice of hearing preachers whose instruction is well known to be such as causeth to err from the words of knowledge.

2. The pure preaching of gospel-truth without disguise, without any parade of human wisdom. What a simple declaration of the truth was Peter's sermon, at which 3000 were

were converted? *My speech*, says Paul, *and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom; but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.* Hence the artful addresses of public speakers to the imaginations and passions rather than to the judgment of the hearers; or such mean artifices as that of telling the hearers, that they will give them so many minutes to consider whether they will come to Christ or not; or that of shewing them a paper, and intimating, that such as are willing to receive Christ must come immediately and subscribe that paper. Such means render any revival that is said to be promoted by them, very suspicious.

3. A disposition among church members to inquire into the corruptions with which they are chargeable, either as individuals or as a church; to acknowledge them and turn from them. Such was the exercise of the Jews in those revivals which took place in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. Such was the exercise of our forefathers, during that remarkable revival in Britain, about the middle of the last century. Hence, a revival in which the public evils of the church are overlooked, palliated or justified, whatever uncommon appearances are boasted of as proofs of heaven's countenance, wants a principal feature of a scriptural revival.

4. A concern to hold fast whatever knowledge and profession of divine truth has been already attained by the church of God; and to be delivered from all contrary errors and corruptions. Thus, at the beginning of the New Testament dispensation, the apostles and other ministers of Christ condemned, not only the errors of the Jews and heathens, but those that sprung up among themselves. Thus, the Synod of Jerusalem judicially condemned the errors of the Judaizing teachers. Hence, the reality of a revival is so far to be suspected, as it proceeds upon a scheme which holds many truths of God denied by such and such good men, by Independents, Episcopalians and others, as of little or no consequence, unworthy to be contended for.

5. Scriptural views of the saving work of the Holy Spirit in conversion, as a secret and mysterious work, which is gradually manifested in progressive sanctification. It is true, the Lord may grant a person sensible assurance of his gracious

ous ſtate at any time after he has once been brought to believe in Chriſt; but he uſually exerciſes the faith and patience of his people before they obtain it. The ordinary courſe is, firſt, the blade; then, the ear; and at length the full corn in the ear. Hence, a revival is much to be ſuſpected, which makes ſudden and uncommon ſhocks and impreſſions on the bodies and minds of men in attending on the preaching of the word, paſs for ſigns of converſion; and where the promoters of the work, teach, "that it would "be as abſurd to ſay, that a man might paſs out of a ſtate "of nature into a ſtate of grace without knowing it, as it "would be to ſay that a man may come out of a dark dun-"geon into the light of the ſun, without perceiving the "change."

6. A real regard to all the beautiful order of the houſe of God, as bearing the ſtamp of his appointment. Hence, the diſorders of perſons crying aloud in aſſemblies for public worſhip; and of private church-members, of their own accord, ſtepping out of their ſphere, and, without waiting for any regular or ſcriptural call, preſuming to act as public teachers, are by no means to be aſcribed to a real revival of the chriſtian religion.

Of

Of Humiliation-days before, and Thankſgiving-days after, the Adminiſtration of the Lord's Supper.

Since our Lord hath not preciſely determined the time of communicating; but by the expreſſion *as often*, hath only recommended the frequent practice of it in general; it ſeems requiſite, eſpecially amidſt a great prevalence of corruption, that a medium ſhould be obſerved; leſt, by too great a frequency, this ſacred proviſion ſhould be diſeſteemed, or the table of the Lord ſlighted and neglected. *Witſius's Oeconomy of the Covenants.*

AS the queſtion, whether the practice which has obtained in our churches, of employing one day in humiliation before the communion, and another in thankſgiving after it, be warrantable or not, is now agitated among miniſters and people, and diſcourſes on the negative ſide ſolicit the public attention,* it ſeems not improper to lay the following obſervations before the reader:

1. The

* A publication lately appeared, entitled, Letters on Frequent Communion, addreſſed particularly to the members of the Aſſociate Reformed Church, in North America. The anonymous author, in his preface, takes notice of an Act of the Aſſociate Preſbytery of Pennſylvania, againſt Occaſional Communion, accompanied, among other things, with "A Survey of the Preſbyterian Churches in America." He obſerves, that, in this pamphlet, it is marked as one of the corruptions tolerated by the Aſſociate Reformed Synod, that the Lord's ſupper is diſpenſed "by ſynodical indulgence," without a previous faſt, and a ſubſequent thankſgiving day. On this account, he charges the author of that Survey with defamation and ſlander. This charge is certainly a very heavy one. The author of the Letters thus condemns the paſſage of the Survey to which he refers, either becauſe it is *not* matter of fact, that the Aſſociate Reformed Synod, having had the diſcontinuation of preaching on thoſe days under conſideration, gave their members indulgence on that head; or, becauſe the author of that Survey repreſents the formal giving of that indulgence, in the preſent ſtate of the church, as a corruption. If the author of the Letters meant the former, he might eaſily have proved from the minutes of the Aſſociate Reformed Synod, that there never was any ſuch thing. If he meant the latter, a candid reader will

1. The Lord's supper is justly considered as peculiarly solemn. All the ordinances of God are holy, as they have a holy

will hardly allow that, because the author of the Survey has declared it to be his judgment, that the Associate Reformed Synod's giving such indulgence is a corruption; therefore, he is a defamer and slanderer of that body. If the author of the Letters shall prove the justness of this inference; or that every one in the present state of the visible church is a defamer and slanderer who represents the principles and practices of other religious denominations as corruptions—he will make terrible havoc: Hardly any will escape; and least of all those that are honest in any profession they make of religion. With regard to our declining to countenance the public administrations under the banner of the constitution of the Associate Reformed Synod, it will be a reason of sufficient weight, with those that are duly concerned to be established in the present truth, and to hold fast whatever the church of Christ has attained; that that Synod, in adopting their constitution and abiding by it, are chargeable with turning back from a more explicit and particular acknowledgment of the truth, which was formerly made by Seceders in this country, (while they professed adherence to the Judicial Testimony, the Act concerning the Doctrine of Grace, and the Declaration of principles concerning Civil Government, of the Associate Presbytery in Scotland) unto the far more general profession made in the Constitution now mentioned. This is a matter of fact, with regard to which any one may soon be satisfied, by looking over the papers now referred to, or, which is in substance the same, the Declaration and Testimony for the doctrine and order of the church of Christ, published by the Associate Presbytery of Pennsylvania. There is not one article of that Testimony, which, before the late union, was not expressly owned by the Associate Presbytery of Pennsylvania as a part of their holy profession. And, therefore, let the members of the Associate Reformed Synod wrangle ever so long, and let them call their neighbours defamers and slanderers, and ever so many other ill names, and with ever so much affected solemnity, it will still remain a very plain truth, about which many of the weakest of Christ's flock are at no loss, that an adherence to the late Union, and present profession of the Associate Reformed Synod, is indeed a departure from a more particular to a more general confession of Christ's truth; an evil of great magnitude, with those who esteem the least of his truths as of more value than the whole world; and who are convinced, that, by declining an explicit and particular confession of any of them, we are in danger of incurring the guilt of those who are ashamed of Christ's words in the midst, of an evil and adulterous generation, Mark viii. 38.

With

a holy God for their Author, are to be obſerved in a holy manner, and are appointed means of promoting holineſs. Yet an ordinance may be ſaid to be more ſolemn in reſpect of the more ſenſible manifeſtation which God makes therein of his glory; in reſpect of the peculiarly awful warning which he gives againſt a raſh and inconſiderate manner of intermeddling with it; in reſpect of the variety of holy exerciſes which concur in the right obſervation of it; and, laſtly, in reſpect of the more full and public repreſentation of the communion which the people of God have with his whole church. That the Lord's ſupper has a greater ſolemnity in theſe reſpects, than ſome other ordinances, ſeems to have been hitherto the ſenſe of the whole New Teſtament church. This is expreſſed by the judicious Mr. Durham, in the firſt of his communion ſermons; where, ſpeaking of the words of inſtitution, he ſays: "Every "circumſtance ſpeaks out a ſolemnity in this ordinance; "as the night in which it was inſtituted; the ſame night "in which he was betrayed; and his jealouſy of and "threatening for the abuſe of this ordinance. The Lord's "ſupper ſeems dignified with an eminence above all other "goſpel ordinances: 1ſt, In reference to what it exhibits. "They all ſet forth love, but this ſets forth love in an em-"inent degree; for it ſets forth the Lord's death; where-"in the moſt eminent degree of his love ſhines. It "ſets forth the great maſter-piece of his love, his "actual dying. 2dly, In reſpect of the excellent benefits "communicated

With regard to the obſervations here offered to the public, it may be proper to obſerve, that the writer does not mean, that they ſhould be conſidered as a formal examination of the Letters on Frequent Communion. What he aimed at was only to ſtate the principles which he judged neceſſary to be held on this ſubject; ſuch reaſons being added as to him appear ſatisfying. Since theſe obſervations were written, I have ſeen four Letters addreſſed to the rev. John Maſon, M. A. of New-York, in anſwer to his Letters on Frequent Communion, by the rev. John Thomſon, reſiding in Glaſgow; an author who formerly wrote an excellent Defence of the Principles of the Aſſociate Preſbytery in Scotland, concerning civil government. It is a peculiar ſatisfaction to ſee this veteran maintaining the principles of the Reformation with ſo much firmneſs and ſtrength of argument, under the infirmities of old age.

" communicated in it. It is true, there is no other thing, " on the matter, communicated in it, than in the word " and baptism; yet if ye look to the words, Take, eat, " this is my body; they hold forth Christ Jesus not so " much giving any particular gift, as actually conferring " himself in his death and suffering. 3dly, In respect of " the manner in which our Lord Jesus makes over himself: " For there is herein not only a most clear view of the slain " Saviour, and of covenanting with God: but also a clear " glance of heaven upon earth, Jesus Christ and his people " mixing (so to speak) and being familiar together; he con- " descending not only to keep company with them, but to " be their food and refreshment, and giving not only the " word to their faith, but himself (as it were) to their " sense! In so far as the mean, whereby he communicates " himself, is more sensible; it is by his Spirit that the mean is " made effectual. There is not only a fixedness of faith on our " part; but a sort of divineness in the ordinance itself, as it " were, to the very senses of the believer. I say unto you, " says our Lord, I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of " the vine, until the day when I shall drink it new with you " in my Father's kingdom: Where he seems to point out, " that in this ordinance, he has a more special way of keeping " communion with his people, bearing a resemblance to that " which he will have with them in heaven." That there is a peculiar solemnity in the partaking of the Lord's supper, appears from the concurrence of duties requisite to the right performance of it. " If it be a great and difficult " work," adds the same eminent divine, " to carry rightly " on an ordinary sabbath, or in prayer, or in meditation, " how difficult must communicating be, in which we ought " to have all these joined together." If all religious duties were equally solemn, then they would all alike require preparation. An ejaculatory prayer, for example, would require another duty to prepare for it; and that duty would require another, and so on without end. The Old Testament church had more solemn days, such as that on which the children of Israel stood before the Lord in Horeb. And there were to be such days under the New Testament dispensation also. Hence, in the vision, which we have in the latter part of the prophecy of Ezekiel, and which judicious

dicious interpreters allow to be an emblematical repreſentation of the New Teſtament church, we have an account of the obſervation of ſuch ſolemnities as the paſſover, and the feaſt of tabernacles, Ezek. xlv. 21, 25. And ſurely, ſacramental occaſions may be ſaid to be ſuch times. A perſon that duly conſiders theſe things, will not be eaſily perſuaded, that there ought to be no more ſolemnity in the breaking of the ſacramental bread, than in aſking a bleſſing at our ordinary meals.*

2. As

* It is with regard to the greater ſolemnity of public ordinances, that it is ſaid in Pſal. lxxxvii. 2. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. "I would aſk you, "Sir," ſays Mr. Thomſon in his Letters to Mr. Maſon, "whether God requires us to obſerve the ſabbath in a more holy manner than the ſix days of the week? And if ſo, whether it is a "native conſequence, that he allows us to be leſs holy in theſe "days than in the ſabbath. Is God more holy on the ſabbath "than on other days? Is an irreverent mind or a polluted heart "leſs offenſive to him on theſe than on this? You introduce "Lev. x. 3. *I will be ſanctified in them that come nigh me.* I "ſuppoſe, ſir, this is ſaid in alluſion to Nadab and Abihu, who "offered ſtrange fire, when employed in a diſtinguiſhed act of "divine worſhip. And I think, ſir, that this divine declaration "would be much better applied, as an awful warning to communicants to guard them againſt raſh approaches to God in that "ſolemn ordinance. One remarkable thing, ſir, you ſeem to "take no notice of, viz. the divine denunciation doubled and appended to this ſacred inſtitution, 1 Cor. xi. 27, 29. Do you really "think, ſir, that theſe awful denunciations do not conſtitute any "difference between this and other divine ordinances? When the "Iſraelites at Mount Sinai heard the thunders, &c. did they not "fear and tremble? And ſhall the chriſtian outface thoſe dreadful thunders, without trembling? We are called upon to prepare to meet our God; Amos iv. 12. and ſhall our preparation for this diſtinguiſhing ordinance be charged with ſuperſtition and will-worſhip? You will find, ſir, four days which may "be called preparatory to the killing of the paſchal lamb. Do "you think that theſe days were not analogous to ſomething of "a like nature with reſpect to our New Teſtament paſſover? "Or had the Jewiſh paſſover more need of preparatory days and "exerciſes than the New Teſtament paſſover? Certainly, ſir, "theſe preparatory days, neceſſarily called for religious exerciſes "not common to other days. Again, ſir, the paſſover was to be "eaten with bitter herbs. Do you think, ſir, it is unnatural or

2. As the duty of preparing for this solemn ordinance is very weighty, before we adventure to the communion-table we ought to set apart some time for that purpose. For, says the apostle, *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat.* Under the Old Testament dispensation, it was required of church-members, that they should be prepared for the observation of the passover according to the purification of the sanctuary. The want of this, even in such as had been exercised in preparing their hearts to seek the Lord God of their fathers, exposed them to smiting; as appears from Hezekiah's prayer, 2 Chron. xxx. 18, 19, 20. In like manner, there is an exercise of solemn prayer, meditation and self-examination, necessary before communicating; the neglect of which even in real christians, may cause very heavy corrections. They appear to have been gracious persons of whom the apostle speaks in 1 Corinth. xi. 30. It is not meant that by our preparation we procure any right or ground of claim to that communion with God which is tendered to us in this ordinance: No, the whole ground of our claim to what is set before us in the communion table, lies in the mercy of God venting to poor sinners through the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. But such preparatory exercise is necessary, as being divinely commanded. God says to persons intending to communicate, as Jacob said to his household, Gen. xxxv. 2, 3. *Put away the strange gods that are among you*, and be clean: *Arise, go up to Bethel.* It is also necessary as a mean of promoting the sense of their sinfulness and misery, of their infinite need of Christ, and of the danger they are in from the legal bias of their hearts. The exercises we speak of, rightly managed, are far from cherishing a legal spirit. On the contrary, it is owing to the indolence of professors, in neglecting these exercises, that they are so much over-run with spiritual pride and a conceit of their own righteousness. In them is verified that word of Solomon, in Prov. xxvi. 16. *The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.* Such

" foreign to the subject to say, that these preparatory days were " partly designed for gathering the bitter herbs; and that their " eating the passover with them was significant of that painful " contrition which believers experience when they look upon " Christ in the gospel passover?"

Such preparation for the Lord's ſupper being neceſſary, a competent portion of time for it muſt alſo be neceſſary. Some time muſt be allowed for the performance of every duty. "Such a time," as Dr. Owen obſerves,* "ſhould "be choſen for theſe preparatory exerciſes, ſo near our "partaking of the ordinance, as may give probable ground "that they will influence the mind in the act of partaking. "Nor ſhould the time allotted for preparation be ſo ſhort "as to be unmeet for going through the duty effectually. "Men may be ready to turn their private prayers into a "few ejaculations. And a thought in going in or out of "a room may be deemed preparation for the moſt ſolemn "ordinance. This," adds the doctor, "hath loſt us "the power, the glory, the beauty of our profeſſion. Nor "is the return of theſe to be expected, till perſons ſtudy to "be exact in their preparation for the duties of their pro-"feſſion; till it come to be the caſe with them, that their "ſouls muſt have real and ſuitable converſe with God, as "to the ſolemn work before them."

This reminds one of the following paſſage in a late publication: "In what does preparation for the table of the "Lord conſiſt? In a multitude of outward performances, "in devoting a great part of the preceding week to various "exerciſes of public worſhip. Alas! all this may be done, "and the heart remain as unprepared as ever. The reli-"gioniſt, who, beſides giving tithes of all that he poſſeſſed, "faſted twice in the week, was not thereby fitted for com-"munion with his Maker. One hour, one minute of gen-"uine humiliation before God; one tear of gracious con-"trition for ſin, one groan unutterable of the Spirit of adop-"tion, is of more value in his ſight than the moſt ſplendid "round of formalities."

All this declamation may be anſwered by aſking, whether one minute of genuine humiliation, one tear of gracious contrition for ſin, one groan of the Spirit of adoption, be not of more value than the prayers, the reading and hearing of the word, and all the duties of a mere formaliſt? Is not this reaſoning, then, as much againſt all theſe duties, as againſt the preparatory exerciſes in queſtion? Nay, is it not againſt frequent communicating itſelf? For were the formaliſt

* In his Sacramental Diſcourſes. Diſ. v.

formaliſt to communicate every ſabbath, ſtill one groan of the Spirit of adoption would be of unſpeakably more value than all his communicating. Farther, we may aſk, whether it be the manner of the Lord's people, or the character of thoſe who have gracious contrition for ſin, and the Spirit making interceſſion for them with groanings unutterable, to hurry over their preparatory exerciſes in one hour or a few minutes, or in one minute? Have we not heard of the ſaints wreſtling whole nights with God in prayer, for his preſence with them in ſome particular duty or trial they had before them? Once more, we would aſk, whether they are moſt likely to attain gracious contrition for ſin, that look upon the work of ſearching and trying their ways as a moſt weighty exerciſe, in which a conſiderable portion of time ſhould be employed, or thoſe who reckon it a very eaſy matter which they can accompliſh in an hour, or even in a few minutes?

3. The exerciſe of faſting or humiliation for ſin, is a ſuitable exerciſe for church-members in general, before the participation of the Lord's ſupper. It is a raſh aſſertion, that we ought to have no public faſt, but when ſomething in our external circumſtances is out of the ordinary courſe of providence: For ſurely the example of Ezra, chap. ix. 5. and of Cornelius, Acts x. 30. and the directions in James iv. 9. *Be afflicted and mourn and weep: Humble yourſelves in the ſight of the Lord, and he will lift you up.* Matth. xvii. 21. *Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and faſting*, are ſufficient to warrant any perſon or people to uſe the ordinance of faſting, for their relief, when they are under convictions of ſin, or when they are called to ſome duty, in which they dare not venture forward, without ſpecial direction and ſupport; though there ſhould be nothing uncommon in the outward diſpenſations of providence. Such diſpenſations are, no doubt, occaſions of faſting; but we have ground to deny that they are the only occaſions of it. The very commonneſs of a ſin calls for this exerciſe. When we term faſting an extraordinary duty, we do not mean, that it is ever the caſe with the church militant, that there is little or no occaſion for it. The beſt men, and the beſt churches, in the beſt times, have abounded much in it. Paul was often in faſtings. When the general converſion of the

Jews

Jews, which we expect in the latter days, ſhall take place, they will be much engaged in this exerciſe, Zech. xii. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. But the reaſon why we ſometimes call it an extraordinary duty is, that it is not to be performed daily or at ſet times recurring, but occaſionally, as the caſe of our ſouls, or of the church, and the diſpenſations of providence may require. While faſting is itſelf a duty, it is a mean of removing our indiſpoſition or unfitneſs for other duties to which we may be called. Hence, it may, on this account, be connected with other duties, eſpecially with one which is more ſolemn, and the management of which is peculiarly difficult. The ſcriptural notion of faſting is not merely abſtinence from food, (which perſons are to uſe in ſuch a degree as they can bear without being diſcompoſed) but is, upon the matter, that ſolemn exerciſe of ſelf-examination and ſelf-judging, which the apoſtle enjoins as previouſly neceſſary to communicating. It is the exerciſe of ſearching and trying our ways and turning to the Lord. Mr. Boſton, in his Memorial for perſonal and family Faſting, has pointed out, with abundance of ſcriptural evidence, twelve caſes which call for this exerciſe. And, though he is there ſpeaking of perſonal faſting; yet it is evident, from the proofs and examples he employs in his illuſtrations, that they are applicable to ſocial or congregational faſting. The caſes he ſtates, are thoſe of a perſon or people, 1. Being in diſorder and confuſion through a long tract of ſinning or careleſs walking: 2. Under convictions, and propoſing to reform, Neh. ix. 12. 3. Falling into ſome attrocious ſin, Matth. xxvi. 75. 4. Eſſaying, through grace, to get over a ſnare in which they have been and ſtill are much entangled, Matth. xvii. 21. 5. Under ſpiritual deadneſs, while the Lord has withdrawn himſelf; Sam. vii. 2, 6. 6. Under a ſenſe of his withdrawing, Matth. ix. 15. 7. Under the preſſure of ſome outward affliction, Job i. 20. 8. Threatened with ſome affliction, Pſal. cxix. 120. 9. Deſiring light and direction about ſome matter of ſpecial weight, Ezra viii. 21. 10. Setting about the performance of any duty, and ſeeking the preſence of God with them in it, Eſther iv. 8. 16. 11. In manifeſt hazard of being enſnared into ſin, or ſome great calamity, Eſther iv. 11, 16. 12. Having in view ſome ſpecial approach unto God,

Gen.

Gen. xxxv. 2, 3. Several of these, particularly the 9th, 10th, and 12th, will be found to be the cases of christians in general before communicating. On the 12th Mr. Boston has the following words: "It is observable, "that, whereas the feast of tabernacles was the most joyful "of all the feasts which the Jews had throughout the year, "a solemn fast was appointed of God to be observed always "before it, four free days only interveening, Lev. xxiii. "27, 34. For, in the method of grace, none stand so fair "for a lifting up, as those who are most deeply humbled, "Isa. xl. 4. Luke xviii. 14. James iv. 10. Wherefore it is "a laudable practice of our church, that congregations "keep a congregational fast before the feast of the sacrament "of the Lord's supper among them, in order to their pre-"paration for a solemn approach unto God in that holy or-"dinance. And for the same reason, secret fasting by par-"ticular persons apart, and private fasting by families apart, "especially such as have not access to join in the public "fast, would be very seasonable on such an occasion." The due consideration of these things, leaves us no room to doubt of the propriety of setting apart some time for humiliation before our partaking of the Lord's supper.*

OBJECTION.

* "I hope," says Mr. Thompson in one of his Letters, "you "will acknowledge that the Jews were as much restricted to di-"vine institutions as we are. I need not tell you, Sir, that, "in the divine institution of the passover, seven days only were "appointed or set apart to accompany it, besides the four pre-"paratory days, which I already took notice of. Yet in that "remarkable passover observed by godly Hezekiah and his king-"dom, you will find in 2 Chron. xxx. 33. that the whole assem-"bly took council to keep other seven days; and they kept other "seven days with gladness. Now, Sir, do you think that this "was a perversion of the divine institution of the passover, or "an incroachment on its simplicity and purity; or that it met "with a repulse from that God, who hath said, that "obedience "is better than sacrifice." Though the righteous and holy "sovereign did not, yet, by your treatment of us, you would "have confounded them with the silencing question, *Who hath "required this at your hand?*——You insist, at great length, Sir, "against our fasts; as being inconsistent with the nature of that "duty. As you justly say, fasts are only occasiona'; your whole "reasoning

OBJECTION. Why is not a congregational faſt kept before baptiſm as well as the Lord's ſupper?

ANSWER. The caſes are not parallel, unleſs when a whole congregation, as ſuch, receives baptiſm, as it receives the Lord's ſupper. Perſonal receiving requires perſonal preparation; congregational receiving requires not only perſonal, but alſo congregational preparation.* Beſides, it is far from

" reaſoning upon this point is founded upon a material error, " viz. that communicating is a ſtated duty; which you always " take for granted, but never have proved. Give up with this " error, Sir; allow communicating to be what our Saviour has " indeed left it, viz. an occaſional duty; and then, Sir, faſting " will be an exerciſe, occaſionally ſuited to that occaſional " duty. Whenever you prove your ſtated or periodical times " of communicating, ſanctioned by the authority of our Lord " or his apoſtles, in the ſacred oracles, your reaſoning on " this matter will have ſome conſiſtency; but till this is done, " your vain ſhew of reaſoning is like water ſpilt upon the ground. " ——I have ſhewn, Sir, that as ſolemn humiliation, and its " concomitant exerciſes, are, in themſelves, duties of divine " appointment; ſo they are ſuited to prepare and aſſiſt the Lord's " people in the ſolemn work of communicating. You even re- " probate the extent of preaching the goſpel, upon theſe ſolemn " occaſions; yet you admit of a juſtification of your Friday ey- " ening ſermon before the communion, as preparative, I ſup- " poſe, for that ſolemn ordinance. This juſtification, Sir, will " equally apply, according to the old maxim, Majus et minus " non variant ſpeciem. It is as really criminal, ſir, by the divine " law, to ſteal a horn ſpoon, as to ſteal a horned cow."

" I cannot help being ſurpriſed, ſir, at your making a man of " ſtraw, and having dreſſed it up, you inſcribe it *either ſin or* " *duty;* and upon this creature of your own fancy, you exhauſt " your whole quiver of ſhadows. The apoſtle comprehends the " whole diſpute in theſe few words, 1 Cor. vi. 12. *All things are* " *lawful for me, but all things are not expedient, &c.* You cer- " tainly know, ſir, that very many moral duties have their de- " pendence upon a vaſt variety of circumſtances; ſo that what " in one caſe would be an important duty, would, in another " caſe, be a criminal violation of duty. Of this we have a ſtrik- " ing example, Exod. xiv. 15. And the Lord ſaid unto Moſes, " Wherefore crieſt thou unto me?" &c.

* The author of the Letters on Frequent Communion, page 10, admits this difference " In holy baptiſm," ſays he, " our profeſ- " ſion is ſeparate and public, but not ſocial."

from being unworthy of notice, that there are no such expreſs directions about preparation for circumciſion or baptiſm, as about the paſſover and the Lord's ſupper.

4. Humiliation-days before the communion, and thankſgiving days after it, are not liable to the charge of ſuperſtition, as the holy days obſerved by Papiſts and Epiſcopalians. We object to the obſervation of theſe days on three accounts: 1. Becauſe they are called feaſts. Our Lord Jeſus hath appointed no other ordinance bearing the external form of a feaſt, than the ſacrament of the ſupper. 2. Becauſe, in the opinion of the Papiſts and Epiſcopalians, on theſe holy days, the time regulates the duty, as in the ſabbath, both being obſerved, according to their periodical recurrence, as holy times. But, with regard to the days employed in religious worſhip before and after ſacramental occaſions, the duty regulates the time. The duties of humiliation and thankſgiving are neceſſary, and therefore ſome time muſt be allotted for them. 3. Theſe holy days are held by the Papiſts and Epiſcopalians to be commemorative ſigns of perſons or things, as formally as the paſſover and the feaſt of tabernacles were under the Old Teſtament. But we admit of no ſuch commemorative ſigns among the ordinances of God's worſhip under the New Teſtament, excepting the two ſacraments. A perſon may not be charged with the ſuperſtitious obſervation of days, becauſe he is found actually engaged in the ſame religious exerciſe on the ſame day of the week, in the ſame ſeaſon of the year, for ever ſo long a period, were he to live and continue in the ſame courſe as long as the age of Methuſelah; while he manifeſtly regards nothing but the opportunity that providence affords him for ſuch an exerciſe, the ſuitableneſs of it to his caſe, and its conſiſtency and connexion with other duties; nor is he at all chargeable with formality, merely on account of that frequent recurrence.

The truth is, the days fixed for humiliation and thankſgiving on ſacramental occaſions are juſtly conſidered as belonging to the circumſtances of time and place, which, as we obſerved in treating on ſuperſtition, are common to religious worſhip with ſecular buſineſs, and which muſt be determined by the general rule of doing all things decently and in order; juſt as we determine the time of beginning and ending

ending public worſhip on the Lord's day; the delivery of what we call a lecture in the forenoon, and what we call a ſermon in the afternoon; our order of praying and then ſinging at the concluſion of public worſhip; and other ſimilar circumſtances.

5. Though it is by no means a principle with us, that our having ſo many days of public preaching is ſo indiſpenſably neceſſary, that, in no caſe or ſtate of the church, the Lord's ſupper could be duly adminiſtered without them; yet we cannot ſee cauſe, as yet, to countenance the propoſal of laying them aſide. We may conceive a time when the power of godlineſs will be ſuch, that profeſſors will not need to be put upon preparation or thankſgiving exerciſes, by being called ſo often to public worſhip before and after the ſacrament of the ſupper; and when they will, of their own accord, employ much more time in theſe exerciſes, on ſuch a ſolemn occaſion, than they do at preſent by our days of public worſhip. But who will ſay, that this is the caſe at preſent? Many are forward enough to ſeek tokens of admiſſion, who make no ſecret of their backwardneſs to ſpare the time neceſſary for ſuitable preparation from the hurry of their worldly buſineſs. And yet when people make no conſcience of ſuitable preparation, communicating will not only be unprofitable, but bring on fearful plagues. While matters are in ſuch a ſtate, the propoſal of laying aſide theſe exerciſes which have a manifeſt tendency to impreſs the minds of goſpel hearers with a ſenſe of the ſolemnity of the ordinance and of the neceſſity of a conſcientious diligence in preparing for it, appears to be quite unſeaſonable; and unlike that concern that ſhould fill the hearts of faithful miniſters to guard poor ſouls againſt the tremendous hazard of unworthy communicating. The writer of this has not now leiſure for enquiring into the manner in which humiliation-days before communions were introduced; neither does he reckon it neceſſary; ſince what is contended for, is not the obſervation of the days, but the obſervation of the exerciſes that ought to attend our communicating. It is not ſuppoſable, that there have been any honeſt miniſters, ſince the days of the apoſtle Paul, who did not repreſent the Lord's ſupper to their people as a peculiarly ſolemn ordinance, and warn them of the danger of coming forward to

it without essaying through grace the exercises that belong to suitable preparation.*

There is no ground, however, to reproach us with the absurdity of making people's attendance on public worship, so many days of the week before the celebration of the Lord's supper, essential to the right participation of it. It is hardly ever celebrated amongst us but there are some admitted, who have not had an opportunity of attending at public worship on the fast day or the Saturday: Though when there is a sufficient call for the exercise of humiliation in a congregation, it must be offensive in members to absent themselves from public worship, who have no other hindrance than the ordinary course of their worldly business; because they are bound by their church state, and by express declarations of the word, to assemble themselves for such exercises, Zephan. ii. 1, 2, 3.

6. It

* With regard to the passages of the Protestant Confessions, quoted by Mr. Mason, against the abuses and accursed inventions which men have added to the sacraments; Mr. Thomson says in one of his letters: "Do you really think, Sir, that these eminent "reformers did intend, or would apply such thundering con- "demnations, against the precious exercise of spiritual fasting, "or humiliation and mourning, as a preparative for the precious "and important duty of communicating in the Lord's supper? "Do you not blush, Sir, at your impeaching and slandering them "with such sentiments? This you appear to be conscious of; "for after all your quotations from the several periods of the "reformed church of Scotland; and after you have asserted that "our numerous services about the holy supper are diametrically "opposed to the current of public sentiment in that church, and "to her solemn repeated enactions from the commencement "of the reformation down to the establishment of the Westmin- "ster Confession of Faith:" You add, "It is very true, that "these acts are levelled immediately against corruptions which "had taken place in the manner of distributing and receiving the "sacramental elements.

"Here it appears, Sir, that you have applied their sentiments "contrary to their own design and intention.

"By a rule of your own making, you conclude, that our days "of humiliation, &c. connected with communicating, are super- "stitious additions to, and corruptions of the divine ordinances; "and, in this view, you pervert the sentiments of these eminent "reformers against those who are indeed of the same principles "with themselves."

6. It is not determined in ſcripture how often in the year or in the month, the Lord's ſupper is to be adminiſtered. We allow the phraſe, *as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup*, imports that this ordinance is often to be adminiſtered, but not that it ſhould be adminiſtered, in all ſtates of the church, either every Lord's day, or even every month.* Surely the interpretation which ſome put upon this phraſe, cannot be proved to be neceſſary from the acceptation of it in ſcripture. In Heb. ix. 25. the word *often* is uſed with reſpect to the high prieſt's entering into the holy place every year. When Paul ſays that he was *in deaths often*, one may doubt whether he was ſo every week, or even every month. It is abſurd to make the adminiſtration of the Lord's ſupper, a neceſſary part of public

* "Our Saviour's expreſſion," ſays Mr. Thomſon, "*as often*, "though repeated, is quite indeterminate as to frequency; and "certainly you aſſume too much in determining to the moſt extravagant extent, what the ſupreme Lord and Lawgiver has "not determined. Frequency, then, is but a deduction; yet you "arrogantly and repeatedly call it the poſitive command of our "dying Saviour: And from this deduction you form another, of "fifty-two, or three hundred and ſixty-five communions in the "courſe of a year. The ſacrament of the ſupper, Sir, is a divinely inſtituted feaſt; yea, the only inſtituted feaſt under the "goſpel. This character is diametrically oppoſite to that frequency, which you would impoſe upon us, as the poſitive command of our dying Saviour. A feaſt, Sir, is a character which "diſtinguiſhes the day wherein it is made from other or common "days; and diſtinguiſhes the entertainment from common "meals. To extend the frequency of a feaſt to the extent of "our common meals, is contrary to its nature and deſtructive of "its ſpecific idea. One of its diſtinguiſhing characters, is, that "it is a feaſt for friends. And ſhall there be no more ſolemnity "in, or preparation for ſuch a feaſt, than for a common meal.

"Your plan in this matter, Sir, is moſt unſuitable to the condition of the ſaints of God in this imperfect ſtate; wherein they "are conſtantly engaged in a ſpiritual war within, and expoſed "to temptation without;—wherein they are immerſed in the "toils and cares of human life, and have their minds often embarraſſed and diſturbed from ſpiritual things. One would be almoſt tempted to think, Sir, that you were burleſquing the diſtreſſed ſtate of the people of God, in your not only making "light of their preparations for this ſolemn ordinance, but even "ridiculing them."

lic worſhip every Lord's day. This would make the Lord's day a feaſt, like the fourteenth day of the firſt month, and other feaſt days under the Old Teſtament. Our divines, in writing againſt the Popiſh holy days, have pointed out ſeveral differences between the ſabbath and ſuch feaſts: Such as, 1. That it was unwarrantable to faſt on a feaſt day. Hence the charge of Nehemiah to the people in chap. viii. 10. *This day is holy unto our Lord; neither be ye ſorry.* Whereas it was lawful to faſt on the ſabbath. 2. That the ſabbath is preſcribed in the decalogue as belonging to the moral law: But the preſcription of the feaſts belonged to the ceremonial law. Hence, while the ſabbath was to be obſerved at home and abroad, by the ceremonially unclean as well as others; the feaſts were to be celebrated no where but at Jeruſalem, (the place which the Lord had choſen to put his name there) and only by ſuch as were ceremonially clean. 3. That the feaſts were appointed to commemorate ſome peculiar benefit, or as a ſhadow of ſome particular myſtery; whereas the ſabbath was appointed for the worſhip of God in general, without any ſuch reſtriction. Nor is the Chriſtian ſabbath, ſays the truly learned Dido clavius, properly a feaſt; for it is no leſs lawful to faſt on it, than on the Jewiſh ſabbath. It was often practiſed in the church of Scotland. The opinion of the unlawfulneſs of faſting on the Lord's day had the ſame origin, with that of the unlawfulneſs of kneeling on that day. Farther, to make the celebration of the Lord's ſupper a neceſſary part of the public worſhip of every Lord's day, ſeems not agreeable to the nature of this ordinance. As the ſacrament of the ſupper is a ſeal, and the word is the teſtament to which the ſeal is appended; ſo it ſuppoſes that perſons ſhould be carefully inſtructed in the word, in order to their partaking of the ſeal. Hence it ſeems abſurd, that, the very firſt ſabbath a miniſter comes amongſt a people, he ſhould diſpenſe the Lord's ſupper to them, even before he had time to inſtruct them in the nature, uſe and end of the ordinance, or about the ſelf-examination neceſſary in order to worthy communicating. This opinion ſeems alſo to tie the benefit of communicating too much to the outward act of it; either as if the outward act of itſelf, could benefit the ſoul; or as if the benefit of it were confined to the time of receiving. The benefit of baptiſm,

once

once received, is continued to the end of life; ſo the benefit of the Lord's ſupper does not paſs away with the tranſient act of receiving, but is abiding and operative afterwards. With regard to the paſſage in Acts xx. 7. *And upon the firſt day of the week, when the diſciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his ſpeech unto midnight;* it has been ſaid, that here we have apoſtolic example for the practice of celebrating the Lord's ſupper every ſabbath. But it is hard to ſee any ſuch thing in the natural conſtruction of theſe words. I was at Philadelphia ſome years ago, and, on the firſt day of the week, when the people of a certain congregation came together to break bread, or celebrate the Lord's ſupper, Mr. B. preached; might I therefore infer that they celebrate that ordinance every firſt day of the week? If I had been at Philadelphia, as Paul was at Troas, ſix days before; and during all that time had obſerved no ſuch public meeting for ſolemn religious exerciſes, as on that day, I might then rationally conclude, that the ordinary day of their public worſhip was not the Jewiſh ſabbath, nor any other than the firſt day of the week; but I could not with the like certainty conclude, that no part of the religious ſervice, which they came together to perform on that day, would be omitted on *another* firſt day of the week. Suppoſing that a ſtranger had been at Jeruſalem ſix days, in the time of the Old Teſtament diſpenſation; and ſuppoſing the ſeventh day had happened to be both the ſabbath and the ſolemn day of expiation; he might have juſtly concluded from the ſervices of that day, that the ſeventh day of the week was the day of their weekly public worſhip; but not, that the rites of the ſolemn expiation were always a part of that worſhip. It has been ſaid, that we have the example of the firſt chriſtians communicating every Lord's day recorded in 1 Corinth. xi. 17, 18, 20. From this paſſage it has been argued, "That ſince the apoſtles, in ſpeaking of "the irregularities which had taken place among the Co-"rinthians in the celebration of the Lord's ſupper, expreſſes "their aſſembling in order to partake of that ordinance, by "ſaying, *they came together in the church;* and therefore, "whenever they came together in the church, they came "together to eat the Lord's ſupper." Now this is juſt as if one ſhould ſay, that, becauſe the Lord's ſupper is expreſſed

in several places of the New Testament by the breaking of bread, therefore whenever the first christians broke bread, they partook of the Lord's supper.* It is plain, this phrase, *coming together in the church*, or *in one place*, may be used with reference to hearing the word or prayer, Acts x. 27. xiii. 44. as well as with reference to the Lord's supper. But it has been said in support of the gloss just now mentioned, that "otherwise their coming together so as not to eat the "Lord's supper would be no proof of their coming together "for the worse." What is here alleged supposes two things to be meant by the apostle, namely, that their coming together was *always* for the worse; and that their disorder in the manner of communicating was the *only proof* of their coming together for the worse. But neither of these things appear to be meant by the apostle. Not the first; for we can hardly suppose that their coming together to attend on the ministrations of Apollos, of Timothy, and other faithful ministers, was *always* for the worse. And supposing there had been only four or five instances, among the Corinthians, of the disorders in communicating here reproved; and supposing that these had not been duly acknowledged and lamented, but likely to be persisted in; would there not, in that case, have been sufficient ground for all the sharp expressions which the apostle here makes use of?—Not the last; since there are other evils, such as divisions and heresies, mentioned in ver. 18, 19. which, being understood in the same sense, as in other places of the New Testament, 1 Cor. iii. 3. and Gal. v. 22. were sufficient proofs or causes of their coming together for the worse. So that excellent interpreter of scripture, Mr. Calvin, takes this passage. On ver. 17. he says, "This, in my judgment, does "not respect abuses in the Lord's supper only, but other "evils, such as the apostle mentions in the two following "verses. Some refer the divisions and heresies mentioned "in verse 18, 19. to the disorder in communicating re-

"proved

* Indeed some have put this meaning upon the breaking of bread, mentioned in Luke xxiv 30, 35. but very absurdly; since the evangelist plainly speaks of an ordinary refreshment: nor is it probable, that these two disciples, as yet, knew any thing of the institution of the Lord's supper.

" proved in the following verſes: But I take them in a lar-
" ger ſenſe: And ſurely, it is not probable, that the apoſ-
" tle would have uſed ſuch improper and unuſual terms to
" expreſs that diſorder."

Such a frequency of communicating, as ſome plead for, ſeems to be inconſiſtent with our preſerving due impreſſions of the ſolemnity of this ordinance. But it has been anſwered, that we may as well ſay, that frequency in prayer, in reading the ſcriptures, in meditation, &c. would leſſen our eſteem of theſe duties, as that frequency of communicating would leſſen our impreſſion of its importance. But to this we reply, that there is a difference between the ſacrament and other ordinances, in this reſpect. It belongs to the deſign of the ſacraments, that the ſenſible impreſſion of the ſign ſhould be attended to with reference to its ſacramental ſignification. In other ordinances, impreſſions on the outward ſenſes are not of any ſuch conſideration. Hence it ſeems reaſonable to allow, that ſuch a frequency in partaking of the Lord's ſupper as would make the impreſſion of the external ſigns on the ſenſes ceaſe to be an object of attention, may be really prejudicial to the ſolemnity of the ordinance; whereas the ſame frequency in prayer or meditation, in reading or hearing the word, in which the impreſſion on the outward ſenſes is of no ſuch conſideration, is not prejudicial, but highly advantageous and even neceſſary. The queſtion is not, as it has been groſsly miſrepreſented, whether we may be too frequent in the remembrance of Chriſt crucified; in acts of faith and love, and the like? But whether ſuch a frequency as, according to the conſtitution of human nature, would entirely efface the ſenſible impreſſion of the outward ſign, be as conſiſtent with the nature and inſtitution of that ſign, as a frequency which would have no ſuch tendency?

It is hoped, that the candid reader will not view the conſiderations now offered, as intended to diſcourage any attempt towards bringing about a greater frequency of the ſcriptural practice of communicating. With what ardour does the great author juſt now mentioned ſpeak on this ſubject in his Inſtitutions? The lukewarmneſs of church-members in this matter can never be ſufficiently lamented. But, on the other hand, we are to beware of whatever tends to leſſen our impreſſion of the ſolemnity of this ordinance,

nance, in which, above other ordinances, (we say this without meaning to limit the sovereignty of God in the outlettings or manifestations of the glory of his grace, which he allows his people in any ordinance, or at any time when he sees meet) the saints have still been ready to say, How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven. We are to guard against whatever tends to make professors secure in the neglect of due preparation. We are also to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. I believe that, were we suitably exercised, we would desire more frequent opportunities of communicating: but I also believe, that no church is authorized to determine positively how often in the month, or in the year, we are to communicate. With regard to the example of christians after the apostolic age, recorded in human writings; the early corruptions that seem to have obtained, especially in the administration of the sacraments, admonish us to be cautious of imitating them in any one thing in which we cannot see that they had scripture-warrant.*

In the mean time, let church-members be careful to embrace opportunities of communicating. We cannot but warmly recommend the custom of ministers, elders, and people of different worshipping congregations joining together at the same sacramental occasion; as the opportunities of communicating are hereby rendered more frequent; the sphere of the usefulness of church-members to one another is enlarged; the communion that obtains among all the members of Christ's mystical body is more fully represented, and

* "The disorders of the Corinthian church," says Mr. Thomson, "and of the seven churches of the lesser Asia, are recorded "by divine authority in the book of Revelation, where you "clearly see exceptions to their primitive love and scriptural "simplicity; and as to the subsequent ages, those who are acquainted with their history, could easily point out strong objections to their primitive purity and scriptural simplicity. Even "your quotations from the celebrated Chrysostom is an evidence "of this. The eloquent Chrysostom complains, "In vain we "stand at the altar; none care to receive." Did our blessed "Lord, Sir, stand at an altar, when he instituted this ordinance, "or his apostles, when they dispensed it."

and ſcripture prophecies concerning New Teſtament times are accompliſhed; as when it is foretold, that the inhabitants of one city, of one part of the country, ſhould ſtir up thoſe of another to ſpiritual exerciſes, Zech. viii. 21. and when the joint attendance of people of different places on goſpel ordinances, is repreſented as their going up to worſhip the Lord of hoſts at the feaſt of tabernacles, Zech. xiv. 16. But, above all, it ſhould be our concern in communicating to have the ſpices flowing forth; to have the graces of the Spirit, ſuch as, faith, love, repentance, in lively exerciſe.

Of the Independent Scheme of Church Government.

It is a dictate of the law of nature, that thoſe who are injured or oppreſſed by the preſbyteries of particular churches, ſhould appeal to the more general and ſuperior judicatures of the church.
Rutherford.

THE conſtitution of the church of God is to be learned from ſupernatural revelation. Its form of worſhip and government before Chriſt came in the fleſh, was moſt particularly delineated in the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament. What belonged to the ceremonial was done away when the New Teſtament diſpenſation took place. But what was of a moral nature is ſtill retained. The practice of the apoſtles in thoſe things which were not peculiar to the apoſtolic age; but are of a moral nature, and of perpetual uſe in the church, is recorded as a pattern to all ſucceeding ages. From the firſt chapter of the Acts of the Apoſtles, we learn that our Lord, during the forty days he was with them after his reſurrection, gave them commands and inſtructions with regard to the conſtitution and government of the New Teſtament church. According to theſe commands, the apoſtles, under the immediate inſpiration of

of the Holy Spirit, acted in settling the church with infallible exactness. Hence we infer, that the change of the sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week, the ordination of ministers by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, and other things recorded as the practice of the apostles, or of the churches under their immediate direction, were things which Christ had commanded to be observed to the end of time. Besides, what is literally expressed in the very words of scripture concerning the government of the church, whatever arises from the import of these words by necessary consequence, is also binding on the consciences of men.

INDEPENDENCY, seems to have had its rise among the Brownists and others, who, towards the beginning of the last century, separated from the church of England, as established by law. Of these Robinson, Cotton, and other refugees from Prelatical tyranny, settled in New England. What they had seen of the evil of Episcopacy, seems to have carried them into an opposite extreme. Afterwards, Independency spread so much in England, that in the year 1643, when the assembly of divines met at Westminster, a number of them appeared to be Independents. Since the period now mentioned, societies bearing that name have increased, and in our day their opinions have become, in a great measure, fashionable even among those of other denominations.

The evil of the Independent scheme will appear, when the truth in opposition to it is exhibited in some distinct propositions, and shewn to be taught in the sacred oracles.

PROPOSITION 1st. *The rulers of Christ's house have no warrant in his word to require of persons, that, in order to their admission to the communion of the visible church, they should declare their experience of the saving work of the Spirit in their souls.* It is true, several things ought to be required in order to a person's entrance into the communion of a particular church; such as, a competent knowledge of the doctrines of the gospel, especially concerning the person and offices of Christ; a profession of adherence to all his truths and ordinances; the outward practice of religious duties, public and private; and an inoffensive conduct towards men. It is also allowed, that pastors should endeavour, as particularly as they can, to know the state of their flocks, that they may

may be in a better capacity to distribute to every one his portion in due season, to awaken the secure and unconverted, to comfort the feeble-minded, and build up the effectually called in their most holy faith. But when the profession and outward practice of persons are such as have been just now represented, they ought to be admitted as members of Christ's visible kingdom, though they seem, as yet, unable to give distinct marks of their conversion. In this way the Israelites were admitted members of the visible church. In Deut. xxix. Moses declares that they entered into the covenant of the Lord their God, that they might be for a people unto him, while they were so far from being able to give an account of the work of grace in their hearts, that he says in the beginning of the chapter, *The Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, eyes to see, or ears to hear unto this day.* None will deny, that we may reason from the manner of admission under the Old Testament to the manner of it under the New, who acknowledge that the constitution of the church under both dispensations is essentially the same, the difference being in accidentals only. Let us observe who were admitted by John the Baptist: All Jerusalem and Judea and the regions round about Jordan, went out unto him, and were baptised. It is said, indeed, that they were baptised, confessing their sins. But when the papists quote this text in support of auricular confession, our divines have still maintained, that this was not a confession made by every one, of particular sins committed by himself; but rather, such as, in general, corresponded with the prescription of duty, which John gave his hearers according to their respective stations and ranks in society, as publicans, soldiers, and so forth. It seems, indeed, impossible for him to have heard the particular confessions of all the individuals in such multitudes. But whatever be said of this, we do not find that John delayed the baptism of any, till they were able to declare their experience of conversion. Nor do we find, that the apostles of Jesus Christ did so afterwards. It is said in Acts ii. 38, 46. that they baptised and added to the church 3000 in one day. These were received on a profession of the faith of the gospel. The admission of the Samaritans was in the same way, Acts viii. 13. Indeed a single instance cannot be produced

produced from the New Teſtament of any who made profeſſion of the goſpel, and were deſirous of admiſſion to the external privileges of the chriſtian church, being kept from baptiſm, becauſe they were unable to relate their experience of a work of grace in their hearts. If it be ſaid, that perſons were admitted by the apoſtles, not barely on their profeſſion, but as it was accompanied with ſome viſible effects of the word; ſuch as the crying out of ſome under Peter's ſermon, *Men and brethren, what ſhall we do?* We anſwer, that though there were ſuch viſible appearances of the workings of the Spirit on the hearts of many who were received on this occaſion, or at the very beginning of the New Teſtament diſpenſation, it will not thence follow, that this was the caſe with every one, or with the generality of the many thouſands that were baptiſed by the apoſtles. In John iii. 26. it is ſaid, that Chriſt *baptiſed*, namely, by the miniſtry of the apoſtles, *and all men came unto him;* that is, they were baptiſed on their coming to him, and profeſſing their willingneſs to follow him. And ſhall frail mortals be deemed wiſer and more exact, in admitting perſons to be members of the viſible church, than the adorable Head himſelf? While he calls the viſible church the kingdom of heaven, he compares it to a net caſt into the ſea, gathering fiſhes of every kind both good and bad; to a marriage ſupper, where ſome of the gueſts are without a wedding garment; to ten virgins, of whom ſome are wiſe and ſome fooliſh; to a field where both wheat and tares grow up together. Such is the viſible church deſcribed by the Holy Ghoſt; and it is a vain and unwarrantable attempt to make it any other, by pretending to admit thoſe only who can give an account of the ſaving work of the Spirit on their hearts. We may learn particularly from the caution given to the ſervants in the parable of the tares, that Chriſt will not have the office-bearers of his church preſs towards the caſting out of all tares or unrenewed perſons; leſt while they gather out the tares, they ſhould pull up the wheat along with them, it being impoſſible for any finite mind to make an exact ſeparation of the graceleſs from the gracious. The way of admiſſion, againſt which we are ſpeaking, is by no means ſufficient to keep out the ſpecious hypocrite, who may have a great deal of head-knowledge, and ſpeak fluently about the truths

truths of religion, wanting neither the ability to give an account of God's dealings with ſinners in converſion, nor the preſumption to apply them all to himſelf. Such a one cannot be refuſed by the Independents; he having all the formalities of their mode of admiſſion; while another, who, by his unwillingneſs to join in fellowſhip with the viſible church, and to be ſubject to goſpel ordinances, gives probable ground to hope that he will be found among the elect of God, cannot, on their plan, be admitted to enjoy the peculiar paſtoral care of Chriſt's miniſters; for it is manifeſt, there are many ſincere ſouls, who are weak in knowledge, or perhaps under many ſenſible and ſinful infirmities, which make it difficult for themſelves, and much more ſo for others, to judge, whether they be in a ſtate of grace or not. If perſons ſeeking admiſſion to church communion, are to be kept out of it becauſe they appear to be unregenerate; then even thoſe appearing ſo, who are in communion, though not chargeable with obſtinacy in any particular outward offence, but obſequious to the diſcipline of the church, are on the ſame account, to be excommunicated. Whereas, according to our Lord's rule in Matth. xviii. 17. obſtinacy in ſome particular offence is the proper ground of excommunication. Beſides, notwithſtanding all the appearance of ſtrictneſs and purity in this Independent ſcheme of church-communion, it is often uſed as a pretext for covering a moſt unwarrantable laxneſs, both in receiving perſons into church-communion, and in retaining them in it. For, according to many advocates for this ſcheme, we are not to refuſe church-communion to the erroneous, or to thoſe who decline ſubmiſſion to an ordinance of Chriſt, if we can entertain a judgment of charity with regard to their ſtate. Upon this plan, a particular church may ſoon be filled with open oppoſers of her own profeſſed principles. Hereby a church lets go, inſtead of holding faſt, what ſhe has attained.

The church of Chriſt is denominated the *temple of God*, Epheſ. ii. 22. purchaſed with his blood, Acts xx. 28. and the members are called ſaints, faithful in Chriſt, members of Chriſt, temples of the Holy Ghoſt, and the like.

But theſe ſcriptures are to be underſtood of the church, not as viſible, but as inviſible. Sometimes the viſible church is denominated from the better part, the ſaints, the faithful,

the kingdom of heaven: at other times, from the worſt part, a ſtiff necked rebellious houſe, children that are corrupters. In neither caſe, is the denomination to be conſidered as applicable to every individual.

PROPOSITION 2d. Chriſt *hath given the power of governing the church to none but ſuch as he hath appointed to bear office in it.* This power is called the keys of the kingdom of of heaven, in alluſion to the cuſtom of delivering the keys of a houſe or city to any one, as a ſign or token that the authority over it is delivered to him. Theſe were given immediately by the adorable Head of the church to the apoſtles, Matth. xvi. 19. *I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatſoever thou ſhalt bind on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven; and whatſoever thou ſhalt looſe on earth, ſhall be looſed in heaven.* xviii. 18. *Verily I ſay unto you, Whatſoever ye ſhall bind on earth ſhall be bound in heaven, and whatſoever ye ſhall looſe on earth, ſhall be looſed in heaven.* John xxi. 21, 22, 23. *Then ſaid Jeſus to them again, Peace be unto you; as my Father hath ſent me, ſo ſend I you. And when he had ſaid this, he breathed on them, and ſaid unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt. Whoſeſoever ſins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whoſeſoever ſins ye retain they are retained.* Let us alſo conſider that ample commiſſion which our Lord gave to his apoſtles, recorded in Matth. xxviii. 19, 20. He delivered this commiſſion after his reſurrection, when he met with them in Galilee, at the mountain where he had appointed them, ver. 16. Here they receive a charge to *go and make all nations diſciples, baptiſing and teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever he had commanded them.* To this commiſſion a promiſe is annexed, importing that he will never fail to countenance and ſupport them unto the end of the world. Some promiſes made to the apoſtles had a peculiar relation to their extraordinary character; as when he gave them power over unclean ſpirits to caſt them out, and to heal all manner of ſickneſs and diſeaſe. Some were given them as private chriſtians; as when our Lord ſays to them, *Whatſoever ye ſhall aſk the Father in my name, he will give it you.* But ſome were made to them as ſtewards of the myſteries of God; when the things laid upon them were neither of an extraordinary nature, nor ſuch as belonged to every particular chriſtian, but things which are ſtill incumbent on the ordi-

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nary office-bearers of the church. Of this kind were the things specified in the commission just now mentioned: Accordingly, the promise annexed was made to them, as having it for their office to teach and baptize; and so to all those who should come after them in that office unto the end of the world. Thus the power of the keys was given by our Lord immediately to the first officers of the church, and not as the Independents allege, to the body of the faithful.

That power was given *for the benefit* of all the faithful, as the object of it; but not *to* them, as the subject of it. Indeed, the apostles were vested with it, for the purpose of planting and gathering the New Testament church, before that church, as such, had a being. If we observe how those who were first sent forth by Christ proceeded in forming churches, it will appear in what sense they understood his commission. As there is not the least intimation, that in the ordination of ministers, or in government, they ever acted in the people's name; so, wherever the people were obedient to the faith, they set apart some among them to teach and rule. Such as had been thus ordained by the apostles, joined together in ordaining others. Accordingly, we read of the laying on of the hands of the presbytery; but no where of the laying on of the hands of the people.

The different sorts of offices mentioned in Ephes. iv. 11. apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, are all said to be the gift of Christ to his church. Hence it is evident, that the powers which belong to these officers, (among which are those of teaching and ruling) are not from the body of the people, or committed to them, as their immediate subject, to be conveyed from them to pastors and teachers. Christ's giving pastors and teachers immediately to his church, is a very different thing from his giving a power immediately to the church of investing persons with these offices. The former is asserted in scripture, but not the latter. That the office-bearers of the church have a power of government, with which they are invested by the Lord Jesus Christ, is evident from the names and designations given them by the Holy Spirit. They are called, bishops or overseers, 1 Tim. iii. 2. Tit. i. Acts xx. 28. governors, rulers or guides, Rom. xii. 8. 1 Thes. v. 12. 1 Tim. v. 17. Heb. xiii. 7, 17, 24. elders, Acts xiv. 23.

xv. 2, 4. xx. 17. Tit. i. 5. 1 Pet. v. 1. paſtors and teachers, Epheſ. iv. 11, 12. ambaſſadors and miniſters of reconciliation, 2 Cor. v. 18, 20. Theſe appellations ſerve to diſtinguiſh thoſe that bear them from the flock or body of the people; and plainly import authority to judge and rule in the houſe of God. Moſt of them are uſed in the Greek verſion of the Old Teſtament, to expreſs both the civil and eccleſiaſtical rulers of the Jewiſh ſtate; and, in other writers, ſuch as Herodotus, Thucydides, Demoſthenes, Plato, to denote civil power over ſtates, cities and armies. On the other hand, the church or body of the people, have ſuch deſignations as make it evident, that they were objects on which this power was to be exerciſed. They are called a flock, 1 Pet. v. 3. an army, Song vi. 13. thoſe who are to obey and ſubmit themſelves, Heb. xiii. 17. If the miniſterial powers had been firſt committed to the church or body of the people, then goſpel-miniſters would not be ambaſſadors for Chriſt, nor act in his name, as the apoſtle declares they are to do, 2 Cor. v. 20.; but ambaſſadors for the church; they would have to act in her name, as having received their power from her. The inſtituted church of the New Teſtament is an organical body, having various members, ſuch as, eyes, ears, feet, hands, 1 Cor. xii. 14, 15. wherein there are elders governing, and a people governed, Acts xx. 28. There is no ſuch thing known in the word of God as a conſtituted viſible church, which may exerciſe acts of church government without officers; as might be the caſe, if the powers of the office-bearers be all originally in the people. We have many epiſtles directed to the members of particular churches: but we do not, in them all, meet with any commiſſion by which theſe members, as ſuch, were authoriſed to inveſt any perſon with miniſterial powers, to judge of his qualifications in order to his inveſtiture therewith, or to exerciſe the keys of diſcipline; as Timothy and Titus, in the epiſtles addreſſed to them, are directed to do. If it had been the will of heaven, that the right of exerciſing the keys of diſcipline and government ſhould be in the people, it is not conceivable, but that it would have been mentioned in the epiſtles directed to them.

OBJECTION. Paul directs the whole church of Corinth to excommunicate the inceſtuous perſon, 1 Corinth. v. 3, 4. *I verily*,

verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already as though I were present, concerning him. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

ANSWER. We observe, 1. That the church of Corinth had a power of excommunicating obstinate offenders. This appears from the apostle's reproving the Corinthians for neglecting the exercise of that power in the case of the incestuous person, ver. 2. *Ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who hath done this deed, might be taken away from among you.*

2. As the power of excommunication belongs not to the civil magistrate, the christian church, in its own nature, being a distinct body from the civil state, and vested with positive laws and institutions, which are to be observed independently on the civil power; so neither does that power belong to the body of private christians as such. It is a power, as we have already observed, which Christ gave for the good of his church in general, and for that of every particular church, as it is a part or branch of the whole. But the subject in which it is reposed for answering the great ends of its appointment, is the rulers of the church; who derive it, not from the body of the people, but from Christ himself, whose ministers and stewards they are. And therefore the persons gathered together, in the name, or with the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver the incestuous person to Satan, may well be understood of the office-bearers of the church of Corinth, *the many*, as the apostle calls them in 2 Cor. ii. 6. Though the apostle says to the Corinthians, *when ye are gathered together*, it no more follows, that every individual among them was the subject of church power, who were to assemble to pass the sentence of excommunication, than it will follow, because the apostle says in chap. xiv. *Ye may all prophecy; every one of you hath a revelation;* that every church member there was a prophet. By those who were to be *gathered together*, here, we are rather to understand the officers of the church, than private members; since it belongs to the former, and not to the latter, to meet for acts of jurisdiction and discipline. Considering, that the Lord had much people in that city;

that many teachers were employed there; and that the churches there are mentioned in the plural number in 1 Cor. xiv. 34. it is manifeſt, that there were ſeveral worſhipping congregations there. Hence, when the apoſtle ſpeaks of the Corinthians being gathered together, it is rather to be underſtood of the whole church of Corinth, as repreſented by her office-bearers, than of the aſſembly of all the individuals of all theſe congregations. Though we deny not, that one of theſe congregations might be aſſembled on the occaſion for the greater ſolemnity, and that they might accompany the deed of the office-bearers with their approbation. But the apoſtle gave this direction to the whole church of Corinth; not to any ſuch particular congregation in it.

OBJECTION. In the beginning of the reformation from Popery, ſome acted as miniſters, and promoted that good work, who ſeem to have had no other external miſſion than the call of the people.

ANSWER. In a confuſed or unſettled ſtate of the church, the gifts that the Lord has beſtowed on a perſon, and the acceptance of his miniſtration with the chriſtian people, may ſerve as an evidence of his miſſion, when no other is attainable, and when there is no neglect or contempt of the ſcriptural order of ſending miniſters. But this extraordinary caſe is no argument againſt the principle, that ordinarily, and in a conſtituted ſtate of the church, the ordaining and ſending of miniſters belongs to the office-bearers only.

OBJECTION. The miniſterial powers are conferred by the ſuffrages of the people, given by lifting up the hand, intimated by the Greek word uſed in Acts xiv. 23.

ANSWER. We muſt diſtinguiſh between the power of nominating a perſon in order to his being inveſted with an office, or admitted to a particular charge, and the inveſtiture itſelf. While it is juſtly maintained, that the latter belongs peculiarly to the office-bearers of the church, we allow that the former ought to be ſecured to the people. Miniſters are not to act as lords over God's heritage, nor to impoſe a paſtor upon a congregation without their conſent. The text now quoted in Acts xiv. and the election of the deacons in Acts vi. are ſufficient proofs of the people's right to chuſe their own paſtors. But mere election is no authoritative act; no act of juriſdiction.

OBJECTION.

OBJECTION. All the power of officers in the ſtate is derived from the people. Why may we not allow this to be the caſe with church-officers alſo?

ANSWER. There is a difference between the two caſes; in regard that God has made no poſitive appointment of the offices of any particular ſtate or commonwealth; and therefore the people are left to follow the dictates of reaſon and found policy, in determining what civil offices they ſhould have. Hence, while civil government, in a general view, is ſaid to be the ordinance of God, Rom. xiii. 2. this or the other form of it is ſaid to be the ordinance or creation of man, 1 Pet. ii 13. But a ſpiritual power of juriſdiction in the church ariſes from the poſitive inſtitution of the bleſſed Redeemer, in whom it is lodged radically and fundamentally. The miniſterial power, as we have ſeen, was given immediately to the apoſtles, in a commiſſion which was to continue to the end of the world; and the method of its regular conveyance to their ordinary ſucceſſors in all future ages, is expreſly determined by a poſitive revelation. All things are of God: The people under God are the fountain of power in the ſtate; and Chriſt as Mediator under God is the fountain of power in the church.

PROPOSITION 3d. *There is, according to the ſcripture, a church repreſentative.* The word *church* ſometimes in ſcripture ſignifies the catholic or univerſal church, which is inviſible, and conſiſts of the whole number of the elect that have been, are, and ſhall be gathered into one under Chriſt the Head, Epheſ. i. 22. *God gave him to be Head over all things to the church.* ver. 23, 27, 32. Chriſt is the Head of the church and the Saviour of the body, that he might *preſent it to himſelf a glorious church, not having ſpot or wrinkle or any ſuch thing.* Matth. xvi. 18. *And upon this rock will I build my church.* Coloſſ. i. 15. *He is the Head of his body, the church.* This is a conſideration of the church, not as the ſubject of an external polity and government, but as under the ſpecial and ſaving influence of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes it ſignifies the catholic viſible church, which conſiſts of all thoſe who, throughout the world, profeſs the true religion, 1 Cor. xii. 28. *God hath ſet ſome in the church, firſt apoſtles, ſecondarily prophets, thirdly teachers.* 1 Cor. x. 32. *Give no offence to the church of God.* 1 Tim. iii. 15. *That thou*

thou mayeſt know how to behave thyſelf in the houſe of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth. Of this church the children of profeſſing parents are members. And hence they are ſaid to be *holy*, and entitled to baptiſm, 1 Corinth. vii. 14. As there is thus a catholic viſible church in the world, to which Chriſt gave apoſtles, prophets and teachers, with an external government; ſo there are particular viſible churches denominated from remarkable cities; ſuch as, thoſe of Jeruſalem, Corinth, Epheſus. Each of theſe is conſidered as a church or body with reſpect to its own members; and yet at the ſame time, as a part or member, in relation to the catholic body of profeſſing chriſtians. Sometimes the word *church* denotes a church repreſentative; that is, the paſtors or church rulers, regularly called and aſſembled together, for the joint exerciſe of the keys of government over a people making the ſame profeſſion of religion. Thus, by the church in Acts. xviii. 22. which the apoſtle ſaluted on a tranſient viſit, we cannot reaſonably underſtand all the individual profeſſors in Jeruſalem, when their number was increaſed to many ten thouſands, but rather the chief members, or the rulers only: In this ſenſe we underſtand the term as it is uſed in Matth. xviii. 17. *Tell the church.* When our Lord, ſays Calvin on the place, directs us to leave our gift, which we mean to offer, at the altar, till we be reconciled to our offended brother, there is no doubt but that he inſtructs us by the form of ceremonial worſhip then in uſe. So, in this place, he alludes to the received form of diſcipline among the Jews: becauſe it would have been abſurd and unintelligible to his hearers, to have referred to the judicial procedure of the New Teſtament church, which was not yet in being. Now it is agreed among the moſt judicious interpreters and writers on the Jewiſh antiquities, that the church to which a Jew would refer ſuch a caſe as that of which our Lord here ſpeaks, was an aſſembly of rulers. Every ſynagogue had ſuch an aſſembly, which is ſeveral times referred to in the New Teſtament. Thus Jarius was one of the rulers of the ſynagogue, Mark v. 22. And the rulers of a ſynagogue at Antioch, invited Paul and Barnabas to preach there, Acts xiii. 15. It belonged to theſe rulers to excommunicate the obſtinate. This is the cenſure which Chriſt warned his followers to expect, John xvi. 2.

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They shall put you out of the synagogue. So that if we allow, (what cannot well be denied) that the discipline of the synagogue is here alluded to, it will appear, that the church or assembly to which our Lord directs the case to be referred, and which had the power of excommunicating an obstinate offender, was an assembly of rulers. Nor was the assembly of the rulers of a synagogue the only ecclesiastical and representative court among the Jews. There is an intimation of a supreme ecclesiastical court, which was to be at Jerusalem, distinct from the civil, in Deut. xvii. 8. *If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates; then thou shalt arise, and get thee up unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose.* Ver. 9. *And thou shalt come unto the priests, the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and inquire.* Ver. 12. *The man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest, or unto the judge, even that man shall die.* Here the disjunctive particle *or*, distinguishes the judges from the priests. And though, in ver. 12. it be said *priest*, it is said *priests* in ver. 9. So that priest and judge are to be taken collectively for two courts of judicature. There seem to have been two distinct judicatures in the time of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xix. 11. *Behold, said Jehoshaphat, Amariah the chief priest is over you in all matters of the Lord; and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, for all the king's matters.* Here are two distinct judicatures; if distinct presidents, and their having cognizance of distinct matters, the matters of the Lord, and the king's matters, entitle them to be so denominated. That the court among the Jews, alluded to in Matth. xviii. 17. was an ecclesiastical court, must be allowed, when we consider, that excommunication among the Jews was an ecclesiastical censure. Its design was the reclaiming of the delinquent, as the less degree remained only thirty days; and, on the person's confession of sin, it was shortened. The sentence was more severe, as the offence was more public, and more obstinately persisted in. If the excommunicated did not desire to be absolved, the sentence was, a second time, denounced against him.*

Farther,

* See Buxtorf de Synogoga.

Farther, that by the church in Matth. xviii. 17. we are to underſtand a company of office-bearers, is evident not only from the ſentence pronounced on the obſtinate offender; but alſo from the power by which it is pronounced, being plainly intimated in the following verſe, to be *the keys of binding and loſing*; keys, which, as we have ſeen already, were committed to the apoſtles in the name of the office-bearers that were to ſucceed them in the government of the church to the end of time. Indeed, to ſuppoſe that all the men, women, and children in a congregation, are to judge in matters of ſcandal, and even in the awful caſe of excommunication, is manifeſtly abſurd. And yet if, by the church having the power of the keys, we underſtand church-members as ſuch, then it muſt be unwarrantable to exclude any of them from voting in ſuch matters; while we cannot find any paſſage of ſcripture in which all the males that are come to the years of diſcretion, excluſive of the women and children, are called the church.

PROPOSITION 4th. *A particular church, under the government of one preſbytery, may include ſeveral worſhipping aſſemblies.* We do not deny, that there may be a worſhipping aſſembly ſo ſituated, that it may conſtitute a particular church, the office-bearers of which have the full powers of government and diſcipline. But when the members of this church are increaſed to ſuch a multitude; that it becomes neceſſary for them to meet in ſeveral worſhipping aſſemblies; though the officers of each of theſe aſſemblies or congregations ought to meet by themſelves, as a court for determining matters, that peculiarly concern their reſpective congregations; yet there are caſes of common concern, on account of which it is incumbent on all the office-bearers of theſe congregations to exerciſe the keys of government jointly over the whole body, and to meet together for that purpoſe. A power, ſays Rutherford, of governing well, and according to the rule of the word, added to another power of governing well and according to the rule of the word, is cumulative and auxhilary, not at all deſtructive of the power to which it is added; nor does it conſtitute a new form of a church, or of church power; it only enlarges and extends the pre-exiſtent form for the edification of more ſouls. Several worſhipping congregations, united under one preſbytery, are

are only a larger congregation. Such were the churches of Jeruſalem, Antioch, Epheſus and Corinth, as they are repreſented in the New Teſtament.

That there was more than one worſhipping aſſembly in each of theſe churches, we are led to conclude from the great multitudes that belonged to them. Thus, in Jeruſalem we find, firſt, 3000 added to the church, Acts ii. 41. theſe in a ſhort time are increaſed to 5000, Acts iv. 4. and afterwards it is ſaid, the number of the diſciples in Jeruſalem multiplied greatly, and a great company of the prieſts were obedient to the faith, Acts vi. 1, 7. Such were the numbers in the church of Jeruſalem before the perſecution about Stephen. After that ſtorm was over, they were again multiplied, till at laſt it is ſaid, that many myriads, or ten thouſands (as the word uſed in Acts xxi. 20. ſignifies) believed. In Antioch, it is ſaid, that, by the preaching of the men of Cyprus and Cyrene, *a great number believed and turned to the Lord*, Acts xi. 21. and afterwards under the miniſtry of Barnabas, much people was *added unto the Lord*, ver. 24. There was, no doubt, a worſhipping aſſembly there, when the church of Jeruſalem ſent Barnabas. But when he and Paul had continued there a whole year, it is not credible, that, in ſuch a large and populous city, there would ſtill be but one worſhipping aſſembly, eſpecially conſidering the abundant down pouring of the Spirit which attended the preaching of the apoſtles. At Epheſus Paul continued more than the ſpace of two years; but it is not conceivable, that ſo powerful and ſucceſsful a preacher would continue there ſo long a time, without gathering any more than one worſhipping aſſembly, or ſuch a number as could meet in one private houſe: For, in the apoſtolic age, and for ſome time afterwards, the places of worſhip were ſmall and retired. The populouſneſs of the city; the account which is given of the converts burning their books, to the value of 50,000 pieces of ſilver, before all men; the rage of Demetrius and the craftſmen raiſed to the higheſt pitch, by the ſucceſs of Paul's preaching, will not allow us to believe, that there were no more members in this church than what could conveniently meet in one worſhipping congregation. That the number of church-members was not leſs in the populous city of Corinth, appears from the aſſurance that the Lord gave Paul,

Paul, that he had much people there; from Paul's continuing to labour among them a year and six months; from the smallness already mentioned, of their houses of worship.

We are led to the same conclusion, by considering the number of office-bearers employed in each of these churches. Thus in the church of Jerusalem, after the day of pentecost, when the extraordinary gift of the Holy Spirit was confirmed on the apostles, by which they were qualified for their office, and called to appear publicly in the discharge of it, they continued together in the city; and, having gathered many to Christ, ordained seven deacons, Acts vi. When others were dispersed, Acts viii. 1. we find them still in Jerusalem. Afterwards we find not only apostles, but presbyters or elders there, Acts xi. 30. To the end that the apostles might give themselves wholly to prayer and the ministry of the word, they set apart seven deacons, who were to relieve them of the burden of the poor, and to serve tables. This surely supposes, that each of them had full employment in the work of the ministry; though, as Mr. Henry observes, they had not occasion to study for what they preached, as we have. Hence the supposition of their preaching but seldom, or only in one worshipping assembly, seems quite absurd. In the church of Antioch we find several men of Cyprus and Cyrene preaching the gospel. To these the church of Jerusalem sent Barnabas: And, when the number of church-members was much increased, he found that he and his fellow-labourers needed the assistance of Paul. After Paul was come to Antioch; there would be at least five or six ministers there. The plurality of public teachers there, is very plainly declared in Acts xv. 35. Paul and Barnabas continued in the church of Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also. Surely, the continuance of all these at Antioch was not necessary to the public ministrations of one worshipping assembly. It is true, Paul and Barnabas are said to have assembled a whole year with the church, Acts xi. 26. But it does not necessarily follow, that they all assembled in one house or place for public worship; for it is no unusual thing in scripture for the nouns, *church*, *synagogue*, or the like, to be taken distributively; that is, for assemblies of the same sort, at several times and places, Exod. xii. 6. *The whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall*

ſhall kill the lamb in the evening. This is not to be underſtood of all the Iſraelites meeting in one place for that purpoſe. They had neither prieſts, ark nor temple, when this command was given. Every head of a family was to ſlay the lamb, and thus it was ſlain by the aſſembly or church of the congregation taken diſtributively. When the apoſtle James ſays, *If there come into your aſſembly*, or ſynagogue, *a man having a golden ring, &c.* the word ſynagogue, or aſſembly, muſt be underſtood diſtributively; unleſs the whole body of the diſperſed to whom the apoſtle wrote, had but one worſhipping aſſembly, or place of meeting; a ſuppoſition manifeſtly abſurd. Chriſt ſaid, *I ever taught in the ſynagogue, and daily in the temple*, John xviii. 20. here, ſynagogue, in the ſingular number, muſt be underſtood of many ſynagogues, in which our Lord preached at different times. So that it might well be ſaid, that Paul and Barnabas aſſembled with the church a whole year, tho' each of them preached during that time, to different worſhipping aſſemblies. In the church of Epheſus Paul reſided upwards of two years. On his ſecond coming to that church, he found about twelve diſciples, who had received the baptiſm of John; and, when he had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they ſpake with tongues and propheſied: And, on his ſending from Miletus for the elders of the church of Epheſus, Acts xx. 17. it appears, that there was a conſtituted church, furniſhed with a number of ordinary and ſtanding preſbyters. And therefore he ſays to them, *Take heed to yourſelves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you overſeers*, or, as the ſame word is rendered in many places, biſhops: Thus, if we conſider the apoſtle remaining in that church two or three years, the twelve prophets, and the ordinary fixed overſeers of it; ſurely we cannot ſuppoſe that all theſe were employed in preaching to one worſhipping aſſembly, eſpecially, when chriſtians had no large edifices for religious worſhip, capable of containing great numbers of people. Nor does the caſe ſeem to have been otherwiſe in the church of Corinth. There we find many prophets; who, though they had an extraordinary office and gifts, yet, as employed in doctrine and interpretation, acted the part of ordinary paſtors. How can it be ſuppoſed, that theſe, with Paul, Apollos, and others who exerciſed the miniſtry in that church, had only one worſhip-

ping assembly in which they laboured? When the apostle says in 1 Corinth. xiv. 31. *Ye may all prophecy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted*, he means, as Rutherford observes, that this was to be performed by course, and in different assemblies. It also deserves notice, that, ver. 34. their *churches* are mentioned in the plural number. We may add, the instance of the church of Samaria: When Peter and John came to help Philip in the work of the gospel, it cannot be supposed that they all went to preach in one house, or to one assembly.

Farther, that there was a plurality of congregations in what is called, in the New Testament, one church, appears also from the diversity of languages among the members. This was remarkably the case in the church of Jerusalem. At the time of our Saviour's coming, there were many among the Jews, who were either such as had come over from heathenism to the profession of the Jewish religion, who were called proselytes; or such as, though of Jewish extraction, had been born and brought up in other countries, to which their ancestors had been carried captive. A numerous party of these were called Hellenists, who understood the Greek language, and made use of the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament. Hence it is natural to suppose, that these proselytes and Hellenists would not understand the dialect made use of at that time among the Hebrew Jews. But as it is evident from the second and fourth chapters of the Acts, that there were many of each of these classes among the members of the church of Jerusalem; so their edification required, that there should be several worshipping assemblies, where each of them might hear the word preached in the language which they understood. The reason why the church of Jerusalem, of Antioch, of Ephesus, or of Corinth, is called one church, is not, that there was only such a number of christians there as might conveniently meet in one worshipping assembly: For we have seen, that the account which the scripture gives of each of these churches is inconsistent with such a supposition. Nor was the reason of this appellation, the church of Jerusalem, the church of Antioch, &c. the oneness of heart and mind among church-members in matters of religion: For that is the property of the catholic invisible church; and the profession of the faith made by the visible

church

church ought to be the same in every part of the world. Nor did it arise, as some have alleged, from an arbitrary compact or agreement entered into by the apostles, in order to constitute themselves into a political or ecclesiastical body. For as this notion is without any foundation in the word of God; so it would make the constitution of Christ's house depend on the will of man, as much as that of particular civil societies.

The true reason of this appellation in the singular number, is, that however many worshipping assemblies there might be in each of these places, there was still only one presbyterial church government. Thus, while the church of Jerusalem gradually increased, till its members were many myriads, or ten thousands, it still retained the name of a church in the singular number, Acts ii. 47. v. 11. viii. 1. xii. 5. xv. 4. xi. 22. xviii. 22. Hence in all the accounts we have of the church of Jerusalem, its officers are still represented as the rulers or elders of that church; not of any particular worshipping assembly there.

That each of these churches was presbyterial, is evident from the presbyterial acts of the office bearers in these churches. The twelve, for some time, acted as presbyters in the church of Jerusalem. They acted as such in making a distribution of the church's goods, as every man had need, Acts iv. 35. They judicially determined how the common stock was to be improved to the best advantage. We have another more solemn judicial act of the apostles recorded in Acts vi. namely, the ordination of the seven deacons. What we consider in this light is not the institution of a new office, nor any thing which was peculiar to them as apostles; but what is imitable by the church in all succeeding times. They were immediately inspired by the Spirit to appoint a new office; but in ordaining persons to the exercise of it, such as Stephen, Philip, &c. they proceeded, just as an ordinary presbytery does. The twelve met. They never met to pen a portion of scripture, to raise the dead, or to do any other thing that was peculiar to the apostolic office. When omnipotent power, or immediate inspiration is in the case, there is no occasion for joint counsel or mutual assistance. The complaint is made by the Grecians in the court. Had they acted as apostles, they would themselves have nominated

and

and chosen proper persons to be deacons; but, acting as a presbyterial court, they direct the people to nominate and choose them: And then as a presbytery, they proceed to appoint and ordain them. We find them acting in the same capacity, in sending members of their body to such places as they judged proper for the good of the church. Thus, when they heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John. Here it appears, that the apostles acted in a double capacity: As apostles, having authority to introduce standing officers into the church, and to settle every particular of the New Testament constitution; and as pastors, performing those acts of jurisdiction, which were to be practised by the ordinary office-bearers of the church, till the end of time. That the apostles acted in the latter of these capacities, is intimated, when they are expressly designed presbyters or elders, 2 John i. 1 Pet. v. 1. Why should what the apostles did, in cases which we allow to belong to the ordinary government of the church, be held extraordinary or peculiar to the apostolic office, more than their preaching the word and administring the sacraments? We have a remarkable example of some prophets and teachers in the church of Antioch acting jointly, or as a presbytery, in laying their hands upon and sending away Paul and Barnabas for the work of planting churches among the Gentiles, Acts xiii. 1, 2, 3. We have another instance in Acts xxi. Paul being come to Jerusalem, was received by the brethren. The day following he went in unto James, all the elders being present. Paul having declared what things God had wrought among the Gentiles, this meeting of the presbyters, First, glorified God for the good account they had heard: Secondly, they represented to Paul the offence which the multitude had taken at what had been reported concerning his manner of teaching: Thirdly, they agreed and determined, that, in order to remove the offence, he should purify himself after the manner of the Jews. This is the very course which a presbytery takes with an offence, which seems to be only taken, not given: They try a remedy which appears lawful and expedient; such as, Paul's purification of himself was conceived to be by this presbytery.

5. *The*

5. *The due ſubordination of church courts, as of ſeveral ſeſſions or congregational elderſhips to a preſbytery, or ſeveral preſbyteries to a ſynod, of ſeveral ſynods to a general ſynod or aſſembly, is ſufficiently warranted by the holy ſcripture.* This ſubordination, in all the degrees of it, is of the ſame kind: Seſſions, preſbyteries, ſynods, are made up of the ſame officers; their power is the ſame as to its nature; and they are all regulated by the ſame ſacred laws. The church of Chriſt, in a particular part of the world, may have more or fewer of theſe courts, as the number and local ſituation of the office-bearers admit. In order to eſtabliſh the ſubordination we ſpeak of, two things are neceſſary to be ſhewn; firſt, that ſeveral congregations are warrantably united under one preſbytery; and ſecondly, that ſeveral preſbyteries, or churches repreſented by preſbyteries, are authorized to meet together in a ſynod or provincial aſſembly. The truth of the firſt of theſe propoſitions has been already proved; the ſecond will appear from the following conſiderations:

Firſt, If there be a catholic viſible church, then it may be under the government of ſynods or general aſſemblies, as well as of ſeſſions or preſbyteries. The church of Chriſt which the apoſtle ſpeaks of in 1 Corinth xii. is both viſible and catholic, or univerſal. It is *viſible*; for it is plain, that the apoſtle ſpeaks of it under the notion of an organical body, having eyes, ears, hands, feet, &c. as it has a viſible miniſtry and various gifts externally exerciſed. He ſpeaks of it as having viſible ſeals, ſuch as baptiſm, by which it is diſtinguiſhed from all other ſocieties of Jews, pagans and others, who profeſs not Chriſt Jeſus, ver. 13. He ſpeaks of the church as a body in which the members know one another to be either in a mournful or in a comfortable condition, ver. 23, 33. Surely church members do not know one another to be in either of theſe conditions, conſidered as members of the inviſible, but rather as members of the viſible church. He ſpeaks of the church as furniſhed with viſible officers, ver. 28. God hath ſet ſome in the church, firſt, apoſtles, ſecondarily, prophets, thirdly, teachers. It is *catholic* or univerſal: For what the apoſtle ſays of it, cannot be underſtood as limited to a worſhipping aſſembly, or a particular church; but applicable to that which comprehends

all that make a suitable profession of faith in Christ and obedience to him, both Jews and Gentiles, ver. 13. all that are baptised into one Spirit. He speaketh of a church that has the benefit of all the diversities of gifts which the Holy Spirit distributes to church-members, as the working of miracles, the gifts of prophesying, of interpretation, &c. He describes this church as a body, the members of which are bound to care for and suffer with one another, ver. 26. a duty which is surely incumbent on particular churches, as well as individual professors towards one another. In fine, the church here spoken of, is that in which God set, apostles, prophets, teachers. Surely, the church to which all these offices, ordinary and extraordinary, belong, is the catholic visible church. The consideration of particular churches as members of this catholic church, will suggest several reasons for synods and higher courts of judicature; such as, that, as the unity of several worshipping congregations is manifested and promoted by their being under the government of one presbytery; so is the unity of several presbyteries, or of the particular churches they represent, by being under the government of one synod. And that as it belongs to a presbytery, to manage such matters as are of common concern to all the congregations or worshipping assemblies represented by it; so it is reasonable, that affairs which are the common concern of several particular churches should be managed by a synod, in which these churches are duly represented. *De majoribus rebus omnes consultant.* Christ hath instituted the government of the church for promoting the unity and edification of the whole. Hence it may be justly said, that the exercise of it in the higher courts, as in synods and general assemblies, aiming at the good of a greater part of the catholic church, attains the end of Christ's institution, in a greater degree, than the exercise of it in the congregational eldership or presbyteries. The perfection of this plan of government requires, that all the particular churches in the world should be united under the government of one general council.

Secondly. We argue for a subordination of church courts, from our Lord's rule, Mat. xviii. 16, 17. *If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him*

him alone. If he will hear thee, thou haſt gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more. And if he ſhall neglect to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. It is plain that, as, according to this rule, the authority of two for the removal of offences is greater than the authority of one; and the authority of the church is greater than that of two perſons: So, by a parity of reaſon, the authority of a preſbytery, including ſeveral congregational elderſhips, is greater for the removal of offences, than that of one of theſe elderſhips; and the authority of a ſynod, including ſeveral preſbyteries, is greater for the ſame purpoſe than that of one of theſe preſbyteries. Again, as an offended perſon, when the offender is obſtinate, is bound to tell his offence to the church, that is, a congregational elderſhip or a preſbytery; ſo if the offended brother be in one church, and the obſtinate offender in another; or if there be two churches between which a difference hath riſen, which they are unable to compoſe; there muſt be a church, a ſuperior court of judicature, ſuch as a ſynod or a general aſſembly, having juriſdiction over both parties, to which the determination of the caſe ought to be referred. Otherwiſe we muſt ſuppoſe, (what is utterly unworthy of the wiſdom and goodneſs of the church's Head) that the plan of government, which he hath given to the church, makes proviſion indeed for the removal of offences which take place between individuals in the ſame worſhipping congregation; but not for the removal of ſuch offences as take place between individuals in different congregations, nor for the removal of the more dangerous offences that ariſe between different congregations or churches. What, ſhall we ſuppoſe that the glorious Head of the church allows and warrants thoſe that are obſtinate in heretical doctrines, or in ſcandalous practices, to paſs without any cenſure, becauſe they are combined together under the name of a church or congregation? The offence between the Helleniſts and the Hebrews, of which we have an account in Acts vi. and which, as we have ſeen, was removed by the preſbytery of Jeruſalem, appears to have been between two congregations. By the church here we are to underſtand an aſſembly of office-bearers, to whom our Lord hath committed the keys of binding

binding and loosing. To them he says, *Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.* To them he makes this promise, *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.* This is to be understood of two or three, or any greater number or assembly of his servants met together in his name; and therefore it is a ground not only for the office-bearers of one congregation, but also for those of many congregations, meeting together for the joint exercise of the keys of government, to expect his gracious presence and effectual blessing to accompany their proceedings and determinations according to his word. This argument is confirmed, by considering that our Lord, as we observed before, here alludes to the usages of the Jewish church. The church, or assembly of the rulers of the synagogue, was the court before which the case of an obstinate offender was to be brought. But if the case was too hard for this court, it was to be referred to a higher court of judicature erected at Jerusalem, Deut. xvii. 8, 9. 12. Here we argue, not for the same courts which the people of God had under the Old Testament, but for what is analagous to them, and what answers the same moral purposes. God made provision in the plan of government which obtained under that dispensation, for preventing the hurt that might arise either to individuals or to the church in general, from the rash or erroneous judgment of a synagogical court: And we cannot suppose that he hath made less provision for that purpose, by the plan of government which he hath given to the New Testament church; for then it would follow, that the privileges of the church under the New Testament are inferior with regard to her polity or government, to those which she enjoyed under the Old; but this is absurd; for it belongs to the method of God's dealing with his church and people, that succeeding dispensations should include all the advantages of foregoing ones.

¶. The subordination for which we plead, is implied in this rule, *The spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets*, 1 Cor. xiv. 32. By a parity of reason, each office-bearer is to be subject to a presbytery; a presbytery to a synod, and so forth.

Thirdly,

Thirdly. We argue for the subordination of church-courts, from the example of a synod recorded in Acts xv. We may observe several things recorded concerning this synod, for the imitation of succeeding ages in the government of the church.

1. We have here an approved example of presbyterial procedure in referring controverted questions, or such as cannot well be determined by a session or presbytery, to a superior judicature. *Certain men came down from Judea to Antioch, and taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.* Paul and Barnabas resolutely opposed this doctrine. They had no small dissension and disputation with these judaizing teachers. But when the presbytery, or the office bearers at Antioch, found that they did not come to an harmonious determination of the question, *They determined*, that is, they appointed by their judicial authority, *that Paul and Barnabas, and certain others of them, should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders about this matter.* And this reference was made not only for advice, but for a judicial determination: For the affair was not referred back to be decided by the church of Antioch; but was finally determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem.

2. We have here an approved example of the office-bearers of two or more churches meeting together, and constituting a synod. We have seen that the church of Jerusalem and that of Antioch, were both presbyterial churches. But we cannot allow that the church of Antioch referred the matter to be determined by the church of Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas, and certain others were sent, not to the church of Jerusalem, but to the apostles and elders who were to meet there. Hence the decrees of the synod, are called the decrees of the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, not those of the church there. One particular church cannot warrantably make authoritative decrees that, as such, are binding on another.* But it is plain, that some of the church of Antioch,

* The connexion of the Associate Presbytery of Pennsylvania with the General Associate Synod in Britain, has been represented as inconsistent with this principle. But the unfairness of such a representation will appear, when the two following things are considered:

tioch, of that assembly there in which there had been so much dissension and disputation with the judaizing teachers, were members of this synod. For, that church appointed Paul and Barnabas, and certain others of them, that is, of the members of their presbyterial assembly, to go to Jerusalem, to join in a synodical assembly with the apostles and elders of the church of Jerusalem. The acts and decrees of this synod are called the decrees of the apostles and elders who were present at it, ver. 12, 22. xvi. 4. among whom were Paul and Barnabas, and certain others with them, as well as the elders of the church of Jerusalem.

Thus, we have here the office-bearers of two churches, met together to determine a matter, in which they were both concerned: And if the office-bearers of two churches may warrantably meet to determine matters of common concern; why may not the office-bearers of three, or more churches, meet together for the same purpose? But farther, we have reason to think, that the churches of Syria and Cilicia had members in this synod, as well as the churches of Antioch and

sidered: 1. This principle must be understood as respecting such parts of the church as are co-ordinate, or of the same denomination; as if one session were subordinate to another, one presbytery or one synod to another, or the general assembly of one nation to the general assembly of another. It is obvious, that this is not the case with the relation between the Associate Presbytery here, and the General Associate Synod. They are not co-ordinate as to number, or as to the rank which they hold in the organical body of the whole Secession church. 2. We are to distinguish between the duty of acknowledging the subordination of a part of the church to the whole, and the exercise of that subordination, as in an ordinary course of references and appeals. The latter, we own, must be regulated by the opportunities which local situation affords. But the former must be regulated by numbers, and by the duty of one part of the visible church to maintain, as much as possible, a visible union with all the other parts of it; not in sinful courses, but in the Lord, and in a joint and stedfast adherence to the whole cause of Christ. Thus, while the Associate Presbytery in this land, consider themselves as a smaller part of the diffusive body, maintaining a testimony for truth, they ought to be subordinate, in the sense above expressed, to the whole; that is, to all the other parts of that body represented by the Associate Synod; whether the exercise of that subordination, in matters of faith, (not personal causes) by references and appeals, be greater or less.

and Jerusalem; in regard that the former, as well as the latter, were infested with the doctrine of the judaizing teachers, and the decrees of the synod were directed and delivered to them as formally binding on them. It seems to have been on account of the delegates in this synod, from various churches, that the inspired writer makes use of these general expressions, *All the multitude*, ver. 12. *the apostles and elders, with the whole church or assembly*, ver. 22. *the apostles, elders, and brethren*, ver. 20. The whole multitude, the whole assembly, seem to be collective names, expressive of the same persons, with the apostles, elders, and brethren. There is much ground for the observation which has sometimes been made, that the word *brethren*, as it is used here, and in many other places of the New Testament, denotes persons in office. Thus, in Acts xx. those who are called elders, in ver. 7. bishops or overseers, in ver. 28. are termed brethren in ver. 32. In the same sense, the word may be understood in Acts xvi. 2. xvii. 6. nay, the word is often applied to church-officers as distinguished from private christians, 2 Cor. i. 1. 1 Thes. iii. 2. Heb. xiii. 23. Philem. 1. 2 Cor. ii. 13. viii. 16, 22, 23. xii. 18. ix. 3, 5. Philip. ii. 25. 1 Pet. v. 12. 2 Pet. iii. 15.

The Independents say, that by *the whole church*, here, we are to understand the whole multitude of professing christians at Jerusalem. But to this we answer, 1. That it has not the least appearance of probability, that the many ten thousands in the church of Jerusalem, were called to deliberate and debate on the question, concerning doctrine and discipline, that had come from Antioch. 2. Why was it necessary, for all the members of the church of Jerusalem to be present? Was it necessary in order to the decrees of the synod being obligatory on their practice and conscience? But was it not as necessary for all the members of the churches of Antioch, of Syria, and Cilicia, to be present on that account? If it be said, that they were present by their delegates or commissioners; we ask, If this was sufficient in the case of the churches of Antioch, Syria and Cilicia, why should we suppose that more was necessary in the case of the church of Jerusalem? We know no solid reasons that can be assigned, for supposing that the presence of church-members

bers in general was more neceſſary in the caſe of the latter, than in that of the former.

3. We have here an approved example of the manner in which a church court ought to proceed in the management of a controverted queſtion, in order to come to a deciſion. The members of this ſynod acted in parity. Paul was an apoſtle, and Barnabas was called an apoſtle, Acts xiv. 14. and a prophet, Acts xiii. 12. and, as ſuch, they were not ſubject to the appointment of any particular church. But, being ſent by the church of Antioch, they acted according to their miſſion, as ordinary preſbyters of the church. When we ſay, that Peter, Paul, and James, did not act in this ſynod by immediate inſpiration, as in penning the ſcriptures, we do not ſay, that they had not a greater meaſure of the Spirit directing them, than what is commonly allowed to the ordinary office-bearers of the church; but only that what they did was the ſame thing, in point of duty, which others are called to do; as when they preached or prayed. It is to be obſerved, that, while the end of their meeting and reaſoning was to give ſuch a determination of the caſe that had come from Antioch, as would prevent the ſpreading of the error, and remove the offence which had taken place, ſeveral of them, as Peter, Paul and Barnabas, ſpake what tended to the determination of the queſtion, namely, that the ceremonial law was a yoke, which neither they nor their fathers could bear; and that both Jews and Gentiles are ſaved by the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. But if no more had been ſaid, the queſtion would not have been fully determined, and no rule would have been given for preventing the Jewiſh converts, on the one hand, from inſiſting on the obſervation of their ceremonies as neceſſary; or the believing Gentiles, on the other, from offending the Jewiſh converts by eating blood, meats offered to idols, and things ſtrangled. The apoſtles and elders in this ſynod, obtained light, as to what determination was neceſſary to be made on the queſtion before them, by degrees, by hearing the mind of different members, by reaſoning from word and providence, and, at laſt, by taking the ſuffrage of the apoſtles, elders and brethren. On the whole, we muſt either ſuppoſe, that the apoſtles dictated the determination of this queſtion, as they penned their epiſtles, by their apoſtolic authority, as under the

the immediate inſpiration of the Holy Spirit, or that they acted on this occaſion, as the ordinary office-bearers of the church ought to act, in the like caſes. On the former of theſe ſuppoſitions, nothing can appear more ſuperfluous and inſignificant, than the manner of proceeding now deſcribed; in the latter, nothing ſeems more natural and reaſonable. How abſurd would it have been for Paul, or any other apoſtle, having written an epiſtle by immediate divine inſpiration, to ſubmit it to the judgment of the elders of any particular church, and to inquire, whether they would have any thing added to it, or altered? The pretence, that the apoſtles dictated the determination of this queſtion by immediate inſpiration, receives no countenance from the expreſſion (uſed in the epiſtle ſent to the churches of Antioch, Syria and Cilicia) *it ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt and to us;* this being no more than what any ſynod may warrantably ſay, when its ſentence is founded upon and agreeable to the mind of the Holy Spirit ſpeaking in the ſcriptures. Such a ſentence is undoubtedly his voice, eſpecially to the churches repreſented by the ſynod declaring it. The pronoun *us* here uſed, referring alike to the apoſtles, elders and brethren, ſhews that the ſentence of this ſynod was given forth by the joint ſuffrages of the ordinary as well as the extraordinay office-bearers.

4. We have an approved example of a ſynod's authoritative determination in matters of doctrine, of order and diſcipline. Here we may obſerve, that the power of a ſynod does not take away or diminiſh the power of a ſeſſion or preſbytery to determine matters that concern their own congregations. The former power is only cumulative, as they ſpeak, or aſſiſting to the latter. A ſynod may annul a particular deed of a preſbytery, that is wrong or irregular; yet the former may not hinder the latter from judging in cauſes of the ſame nature afterwards. The power of a ſynod, or any other church-court, is not properly legiſlative, but miniſterial. It is not a power of making new laws, but only of declaring the laws which Chriſt hath given to his church, and of applying them to particular caſes, as they occur. It is a power that is purely ſpiritual, not extending to civil cauſes as ſuch, nor to the inflicting of civil puniſhments. It is a power, however, not merely of giving advice, but of decreeing or determining authoritatively. Surely, nothing

leſs can be imported in ſuch expreſſions as theſe: *The apoſtles and elders at Jeruſalem ordained decrees, and laid burdens* on the churches. They were ſuch decrees as would bring church cenſure on the contemners. We may obſerve the exerciſe of a threefold power, exemplified in theſe decrees: 1ſt, A dogmatic power, by which the grand article of juſtification by the faith of Chriſt without the works of the law, was aſſerted, and the contrary error, concerning the neceſſity of circumciſion, and other Jewiſh ceremonies, to ſalvation, was condemned, ver. 24. compared with ver. 11. 2dly, A diatactic power, by which the ſynod enacted a regulation for removing and avoiding offences, agreeable to the general precepts of the word for maintaining peace, order and unity in the church of Chriſt. They guarded againſt the offence of the believing Gentiles, by prohibiting any to require of them the obſervation of the ceremonial law; and, againſt the offence of the believing Jews, by enjoining the Gentiles to abſtain from meats offered to idols, from blood, and from things ſtrangled, and from fornication. Theſe things belong to the precepts, to which the Jews required an aſſent of perſons who were to be received as proſelytes. 3dly, A critic, or judicial power, in the cenſure paſſed upon the falſe teachers, who are branded with the ignominious names of troublers of the church, ſubverters of ſouls, and and liars. There was no expreſs determination of this matter before. Hence it was not neceſſary to proceed to a higher cenſure of theſe falſe teachers, till it ſhould appear that they perſiſted obſtinately in their courſe, notwithſtanding the deciſion now made.

We conclude this eſſay with an account of ſome of the dangerous conſequences of caſting off the ſubordination of church-courts.

1. To deny this ſubordination, is to ſay, as we have already hinted, that Chriſt hath given his church a very defective plan of government; that is, ſuch a plan as provides ſome remedy for leſſer evils, ſuch as the offence of an individual in a congregation; but none for greater and more dangerous ſcandals; as when there is a ſchiſm between the members of one church and thoſe of another. Nay, without the ſubordination of church-courts, there is hardly any ground

ground for the authoritative exercise of church-discipline, even within the limits of a congregation; these limits being uncertain, depending upon the momentary determination of individuals: For it cannot be pretended, that the scripture formally determines how many persons shall belong to this or the other worshipping assembly, or how far the boundary of it shall extend; and on the supposition of which we speak, there is no superior court to determine this matter. Hence a number scandalous persons, in order to avoid the congregational censures, have only to form themselves into a separate independent society; and then, on the plan in question, the congregation has no more right to censure them, than they have to censure the congregation. However far they go astray, they have none over them in the Lord to admonish them. We have a scripture rule for the office-bearers whom Christ hath given to the church, meeting together as they have an opportunity for the exercise of the keys of government in his name; but we have no scripture rule for the formation of two independent congregations, contiguously situated, as in the same city: They may pretend they have the general rules of the word; but Papists, and prelates have the same pretence for their respective schemes of church government. Thus, the Independent scheme, renders the connexion even among the members of a congregation quite loose and uncertain. The protestant churches owe it to the general spread of Independent notions, that they are now crumbled into innumerable sects; every party of mal-contents assuming to themselves the power of making a church of their own, upon the slightest grounds, and sometimes without pretending to give the church, or the world, any rational or scriptural ground at all.

2. To deny presbyterial subordination, is to say, that the authority of one church, however few its members and officers, is greater than that of many churches equally pure, joined together in one body; as if the authority of one of the United States were supposed to be greater than that of the whole; and as if a threefold cord might be more easily broken, than one of the folds of which it is composed.

3. Without presbyterial subordination there is little ground to expect, that the church of Christ at large, or any considerable part of it, will be uniform in doctrine, worship, discipline

discipline and government. The primary bond of ecclesiastical conjunction, is, indeed, an acknowledgment of the truth, as it is contained in the holy scriptures, the only rule of faith and practice, Isai. viii. 20. Gal. vi. 16. 2 Pet. i. 9.; but a confession of particular articles of revealed truth, contained in the scriptures, but neglected and opposed by many bearing the christian name, is, in the present state of the church at large, necessary as a subordinate bond of union. For, as one justly observes, such is the boldness and wickedness of men, that they wrest the holy scriptures to their own destruction; such is their cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, that they father their lies upon the holy scriptures; they even pretend scripture for their gross and pernicious errors. Hence confessions of faith, and public testimonies, are necessary, as means of confessing the truth in opposition to the sleight of men who pervert it; and necessary to evidence, that we receive the holy scriptures in their genuine sense. Now it is plain, that, without presbyterial subordination, there is no ground to hope for the union of many worshipping congregations in maintaining the same confession, or testimony for truth; for, without that subordination, there is no ecclesiastical authority to which they, in common, own subjection in the Lord; and, as such a testimony cannot be said to be held by a congregation, or worshipping assembly, where no person is censured or excluded from sealing ordinances, for the open rejection of it; so it can as little be said to be held by a number of such congregations, while any of them may cast away this or the other article of it, without being liable on that account to any church censure. Hence, it has been justly observed, that the Independent scheme, is an enemy to confessions, and other subordinate standards.

4. According to the opinion of Independents, there is no provision made in the scriptural constitution of the church, for the propagation of the gospel among the heathens and infidels. For upon their plan, a minister is under the direction of his own congregation; and a congregation has no power without its own bounds, no power of sending him any where else. It seems to be owing to the secret prevailing influence of Independent principles, that many, forgetting or despising the blessed provision which Christ's own ordinance of presbyterial

byterial church government makes for the propagation of chriſtianity among the heathen, have had recourſe to human devices for that purpoſe. Some profeſs to go among the Indian tribes to preach the goſpel, upon ſome notion in their own minds, without any external miſſion; but *how can they preach, except they be ſent?* Miſſionary ſocieties are alſo formed, the members of which do not pretend to act as office-bearers of any particular church, and yet take upon them to judge who are to be ſent to preach the goſpel to the heathen, and to ſend them accordingly, not conſidering that it belongs to a preſbytery to ſend miniſters any where, Acts viii. 14. xiii. 1, 2, 3. Beſides, while theſe ſocieties are compoſed of perſons of different religious perſuaſions, they cannot avoid being inſtrumental in ſending ſome, who they have ground to believe, will propagate what is ſinful and erroneous; as if we were not as much bound to convey the chriſtian religion pure and entire, to other countries or nations, as to preſerve it ſo in our own.

5. The Independent ſcheme is moſt tyrannical, as it admits of no appeal from the ſentence of a congregation, however injurious.*

Of

* Whoever deſires fuller information on this ſubject, may conſult Rutherford's Due Right of Preſbytery, Aiton's Conſtitution of the Chriſtian Church, and a ſermon of the late Mr. Muir of Paiſley, on Courts of Review.

Of the Government of the Epiſcopal Church.

I wiſh no precedency of place were allowed in the church of God. *Gregory Nazianzen.*

It is agreed on all hands, that in the age of the apoſtles there was no difference between biſhops and preſbyters.* *Caſſander.*

AN aſpiring diſpoſition appeared among the diſciples of Chriſt, whilſt he ſojourned on earth: For there was a ſtriſe amongſt them, which of them ſhould be accounted the greateſt: John in his 3d epiſtle, ſpeaks of a Diotrephes, who loved the pre-eminence. There is hardly a particular church free from the bitter fruits of this temper. But of all theſe fruits, there has been none more remarkable, or of longer continuance, than Prelacy. Jerome, who lived in the fourth century, declares, that the ſetting up of biſhops over preſbyters, was by the church's cuſtom, not by the decrees of the apoſtles, and that it was introduced for the preventing ſchiſm. But, as Whitaker, an eminent divine of the church of England, obſerves, the remedy was worſe than the diſeaſe.† Epiſcopacy ſeems to be growing unpopular, and many wiſh to ſee the dignitaries of the church brought down. In ſome, this deſire proceeds from the hatred of chriſtianity itſelf, with which they falſely ſuppoſe theſe dignataries are connected. In others, it proceeds from the capricious humour of the age, or from the ungenerous pleaſure which the vulgar take in ſeeing men reduced from elevated ſtations of worldly honour to a level with themſelves. The firſt of theſe motives is moſt deteſtable, and can be found with thoſe only, who are given up to all impiety: The other two muſt be deſpiſed by every conſiderate perſon.

But

* Covenit inter omnes, olim apoſtolorum ætate inter Epiſcopos et Preſbyteros diſcrimen nullum fuiſſe.

† In his book De Eccleſia, Quæſt. i. cap. 3. ſect. 29.

But there are not wanting ſolid principles, upon which we juſtly regard the fall of Epiſcopacy as an event devoutly to be prayed for; and, though we wiſh the biſhops all happineſs as men, and as chriſtians; yet, as to their church power, we long for the time, when they ſhall be brought to the rank of other miniſters of Chriſt.

It is propoſed to repreſent, in this eſſay, the principles which the holy ſcriptures warrant us to hold in oppoſition to Prelacy.

Firſt. *The government of every conſtituted church, ought to be adminiſtered, not by one, but by a plurality of office-bearers.* Thus, in the xviiith chapter of Matthew, when an offence cannot be done away in private, our Lord directs the offended party to *tell the church;* that is, the aſſembly of office-bearers, to whom the keys of binding and looſing, of admitting to, and excluding from the ſacramental ſeals, are committed. This is very plain, in the accounts we have in the New Teſtament of particular conſtituted churches. Thus, the twelve apoſtles reſided for ſome years in the church of Jeruſalem, and carried on the government of that church jointly, without any one of them being elevated, as a biſhop, over the reſt. They could not all be biſhops, in the Epiſcopalian ſenſe, there; for it is a maxim with Epiſcopalians, that in one church there ſhould be but one biſhop. We find the apoſtles performing acts of juriſdiction jointly. They jointly laid their hands on and appointed the deacons. They jointly ſent Peter and John to Samaria. They jointly gave to Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowſhip. We find that there were many biſhops in the church of Epheſus, all employed in feeding or ruling the church, Acts xx. 28. and alſo in the church of Philippi. Hence Paul directs an epiſtle to the ſaints in Chriſt Jeſus, which are at Philippi. Thus we find ordination performed by a plurality of preſbyters, 1 Tim. iv. 14. *Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the preſbytery.* The Greek word here tranſlated *the preſbytery*, is found in other two places only of the New Teſtament, Luke xxii. 66. and Acts xxii. 5. in both which places, it ſignifies a college or company of rulers. Thus, at Antioch, a plurality of office-bearers were employed in ſending away Paul and Barnabas, Acts xiii. 1, 2, 3. Such dominion

minion as is implied in one bishop having the sole rule or government of one church, appears to be that which is forbidden by our Lord in Luke xxii. 25, 26. Matth xx. 24. where dominion is not to be understood of that only which is tyranical. Dr. Whitby on the last of these texts says, "I do not think that Christ only here forbiddeth such "dominion as is attended with tyranny, oppression and con- "tempt of their subjects. 1st, Because Luke useth only the "simple verbs which bear no such ill sense. 2dly, Because "kings and governors are not always guilty of this mal- "administration. 3dly, Because Christ does not oppose to "their government a just dominion, but a ministry only." In support of the notion of a monarchy in each particular church, the Episcopalians urge several things; as 1st, That the apostles had a power over ordinary presbyters, and that the apostlic power is transmitted to bishops. Answer. We deny that the apostolic office, as it was distinguished from that of teaching presbyters, is continued in the church. It appears to have belonged to the apostolic office, as such, that the person invested with it should be one who was an eye witness of Christ's resurrection, Acts i. 21, 22.; who had an universal commission, and who was under the infallible direction of immediate inspiration, in delivering to the church what he had received from the Lord Christ. In these respects, the apostles had no successors. They are much deceived, says Spanheim, who would bring down the apostles to the order of the bishops of particular churches. We allow, that they might be called bishops in respect of what was common to them with ordinary bishops: but it cannot be proved, that this was any more than what was common to them with presbyters. 2dly, They suppose that the twelve apostles, whom our Lord first appointed, had a paramount power over the seventy disciples whom he afterwards sent forth, and that the bishops succeed to the former, and the presbyters to the latter. Answer. Both these assertions are justly denied; the first, because the seventy did not derive their power from the apostles, but immediately from Christ, "They enjoyed," says Dr. Stillingfleet, in his Irenicum, "the same privileges, they were sent upon the same errands, "namely, making way for Christ's entertainment in the "several cities they went to; yea, all things were parallel

"between

" between them and the apoſtles in their miſſion." The laſt, becauſe the miſſion recorded in Luke x. did not conſtitute the ſeventy diſciples governors in the chriſtian church, which was not yet in being. Their commiſſion was only temporary. It is not credible, therefore, that the ſeventy had ſucceſſors among the office bearers in the chriſtian church; ſince they themſelves received no commiſſion to be office-bearers in it. 3dly, They ſuggeſt, that James was conſtituted biſhop of Jeruſalem, Acts xii. 17. Anſwer. James's power (though the ancients allowed that he had been before only a diſciple) was now the ſame with that of the apoſtles themſelves. But, for James, after he was advanced to the office of an apoſtle, to become a biſhop, would be ſuch an irregularity, as would be for a biſhop to be made a deacon. Beſides, there is no proof, that James ever acted by himſelf, or otherwiſe than in conjunction with the elders of Jeruſalem, in the government of that church. 4th, They urge, that Timothy and Titus were biſhops; the one of Epheſus, the other of Crete. Anſwer. This is ſufficiently confuted by the following words of Dr. Whitby: " If by ſaying Timo-" thy and Titus were biſhops, the one of Epheſus, the " other of Crete, we underſtand, that they took upon them " theſe churches, or dioceſes, as their fixed and peculiar " charge, in which they were to preſide for term of life, I be-" lieve, Timothy and Titus were not thus biſhops: For, " 1ſt, Both Timothy and Titus were evangeliſts. Now the " work of the evangeliſts was this; to lay the foundation " of the faith in barbarous nations, to conſtitute them paſ-" tors. And having committed to them the cultivating of " theſe new plantations, they paſſed on to other countries " and nations. 2d, As for Titus, he was only left in Crete " to ordain elders in every city, and to ſet in order things " that were wanting. Having therefore done that work, " he had done all that was aſſigned him in that ſtation; and " therefore Paul ſends for him the very next year to Nico-" polos." We may add, that the elders of Epheſus, were already biſhops, Acts xx. 28. as were alſo thoſe whom Titus ordained at Crete, Tit. i. 5, 7. So that in each of theſe places they only needed an evangeliſt to direct and aſſiſt, till their government was ſettled, and things brought to a fixed order. Farther, we may obſerve, that Paul's beſeech-

ing

ing Timothy to abide at Ephesus, is an argument that he was not an established bishop there: For we cannot conceive the apostle would only beseech a bishop to reside in his own diocese: He would surely have told him, that he could not do otherwise without grosly neglecting his duty. 5thly, Epaphroditus, say they, is called the apostle of the Philippians, and therefore he must have been their bishop. Answer. The *voces signatæ*, or titles of the office-bearers of the church, are sometimes used in their primary or common signification. Thus the Διακονος, deacon, sometimes signifies any ministring servant. In like manner, αποστολος is sometimes put for any one that is sent as a messenger. John xiii. 16. Though the appellation, an apostle of Jesus Christ, always denotes a person in office; yet your apostle, or the church's apostle, does not. Now that Epaphroditus was an apostle, as being sent by the church of Philippi, is evident from the words of Paul, Phil. iv. 8. *I am full, having received of Epaphroditus, the things which were sent from you.* 6thly, The high priest was chief ruler in the Jewish church; so one bishop ought to govern each particular christian church. Answer. It has been shewn by Stillingfleet and others, that the christian church was formed, not on the model of the temple, but upon that of the synagogue. The order of the temple was ceremonial or typical; and is done away in the coming of Christ; christians having no other high priest over them than Jesus Christ. We are by no means to suppose, that the orders of ministers among christians are to be adjusted to those of the Jewish priesthood.

Secondly. *There is no ground in scripture for the supposition, that a presbyter, having the power of preaching the word and administring the sacraments, is a different church officer from a bishop; or that the powers of ordination and government belong of right to the latter only, and not the former.* For not only the name, but also all the acts and qualifications of bishops, are ascribed to presbyters or elders. Remarkable to this purpose, is that passage which we have in Acts xx. 17, 28. and Paul sent from Miletus to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church; and when they were come to him, he said, *Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers;* or, (as the same word is translated in other places) *bishops, to feed the church*

church of God. It is evident from the connexion, that the church, of which the perſons here ſpoken of were elders, was no other than the ſingle church of Epheſus. Theſe officers, called *preſbyters* or *elders*, ver. 17. are called *biſhops*, in ver. 28. They were all miniſters of the church of Epheſus. This was the flock, to which they were charged to take heed, not only in teaching, but alſo in ruling; for, to feed officially in the language of ſcripture, is to rule; and there is no hint, that they had any ſuperior church officer among them. Another paſſage, ſhewing that the office of a preſbyter and a biſhop is the ſame, we have in 1 Pet. v. 1, 2. *The elders who are among you I exhort, who am alſo an elder and a witneſs of the ſufferings of Chriſt. Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the overſight thereof.* In the former text elders are called biſhops; here they are ſaid to feed or rule the church of God, επισκοπουντες, performing the office of biſhops; an expreſſion fully holding forth, that they have the power of ordination and government, as well as that of diſpenſing word and ſacraments. The ſame thing is evident from the apoſtle's direction in his epiſtle to Titus, chap. i. 5, 6, 7. *For this cauſe I left thee in Crete that thou mighteſt ſet in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee. If any be blameleſs, the huſband of one wife, having faithful children; not accuſed of riot or unruly. For a biſhop muſt be blameleſs, as the ſteward of God.* To ſuppoſe the office of a biſhop to be another and higher office than that of a preſbyter or elder, makes the apoſtle argue as inconſiſtently, as if one ſhould ſay, ſuch qualifications are neceſſary in an inferior officer; for they are neceſſary in one that is ſuperior. Learned men have obſerved, that the Syriac verſion of the New Teſtament, the moſt ancient verſion extant, has not two words, one to ſignify a preſbyter, and the other a biſhop, as in the original Greek, and in modern tranſlations; but one word for both. *I left thee in Crete to ordain elders in every church; for an elder muſt be blameleſs.* Farther, in the third chapter of the firſt epiſtle to Timothy, the apoſtle having deſcribed a biſhop as apt to teach, and as ruling the church of God, he paſſes on without the leaſt hint of an inferior teaching preſbyter, to deſcribe the office of a deacon. Surely if it had been neceſſary for Timothy to ordain teaching preſbyters

ters different from bishops, the apostle would have spoken of them distinctly, as well as of deacons. Ordination, the power of which is much insisted on, as vested peculiarly in bishops, is expressly ascribed to presbyters, 1 Timothy iv. 14. and church-censure is said to be inflicted by them, 2 Cor. ii. 6. for these who say that there should be only one bishop in one church, will not allow *the many* here mentioned to be bishops. Now if there be neither name nor qualifications, nor acts mentioned in scripture, that distinguish the office of a bishop from that of a presbyter; we may safely conclude, that they ought not to be distinguished at all. Dr. Hammond and Dr. Dodwel, two principal Episcopal writers, were so far in the right, when they allowed that there are no such distinct officers to be found in the New Testament; though they contradict one another; the former holding that, in scripture times, there were no presbyters; and the latter strenuously maintaining, that, in these times, there were as yet no bishops.

The scripture seems to represent the power of dispensing the gospel and the sacramental seals, as a more important part of the trust committed to ministers, than the power of ruling. *Let the elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in word and doctrine.* To bear rule in the church is not so honourable as to bear Christ's embassy of reconciliation. To set apart one to the work of the ministry is, surely, not more solemn or important than the act of setting apart the elements to represent, seal and apply the body and blood of Christ. If ordination and government had been the chief parts of the ministry, we may reasonably suppose, that they would have been mentioned first and most expressly in our Lord's commission, Matth. xxviii. 19, 20. Mark xvi. whereas preaching and baptizing are more expressly mentioned, while ordination and government are only implied. When Paul speaks of the principal part of the ministry committed to him, he gives preaching the preference. *Christ sent me*, says he, *not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.* Is it not then preposterous, that those who are warranted to do what is greater, to dispense word and sacrament, should not be allowed to do what is less, to act as rulers in the church?

An

An extract may here be added of an epiſtle of Jerome to Evagrius. "I hear," ſays he, "there is one ſo mad as to "prefer the deacons to the preſbyters, that is, to the biſhops. "For ſince the apoſtle clearly teaches, that biſhops and preſ- "byters are the ſame, how can a ſervant of tables and wid- "ows, proudly prefer himſelf to thoſe at whoſe prayers the "ſacrament of Chriſt's body and blood is conſecrated. You "require a proof. Hear a teſtimony. Paul and Timothy, "ſervants of Jeſus Chriſt, to all the ſaints who are at Phil- "ippi, with the biſhops and deacons. Would you have "another example? In the Acts of the Apoſtles, Paul "ſpeaks thus to the elders of one church: Take heed to "yourſelves, and to all the flock over which the Holy "Ghoſt hath made you biſhops, to rule the church of God. "And that none may contentiouſly plead, that there were "many biſhops in one church, hear alſo another teſtimony, "whereby it is moſt evidently proved that biſhop and preſ- "byters are the ſame, Tit. i. 5, 6, 7. For this cauſe I left "thee in Crete, that thou ſhouldſt ordain elders in every "city;—if any be blameleſs: For a biſhop muſt be blame- "leſs, &c. 1 Tim. iv. 14. Neglect not the gift which is in "thee, which was given thee by the laying on of the hands "of the preſbytery. Peter alſo in his firſt epiſtle, ſays, "The elders which are among you I beſeech, who am alſo "an elder and a witneſs;—rule the flock of Chriſt, and "inſpect it; which inſpection is more emphatically expreſ- "ſed by the Greek word here uſed, it being the word "whence the name biſhop is derived." In another place, the ſame learned father ſays: "Among the ancients biſhop "and preſbyter were the ſame, but by degrees the whole "care was devolved in one, that the ſeeds of diviſion might "be taken away. Let the biſhops know that they are "greater than preſbyters, rather by the cuſtom of the church "than by the truth of the Lord's diſpoſition or appoint- "ment; and that they ought to govern the church in com- "mon."

The Epiſcopalians, who rely much upon the ancient fathers for the ſupport of their cauſe, are greatly perplexed by this teſtimony of one of the moſt valuable of them, eſpecially in reſpect of his knowledge of church hiſtory, and of the lan- guage of ſcripture. Some of them ſay, that Jerome means,

that biſhop and preſbyter were one in name, but not in degree: But it is plain, that this conſtruction of Jerome's words, would turn the reaſon, which he made uſe of, to repreſs the inſolence of the deacon, into a ridiculous punning upon the words biſhop and preſbyter. Beſides, if it was not a diſtinction of mere names, which was deviſed as a remedy of ſchiſm; then it was not the identity of mere names, which was the pretended cauſe of ſchiſm. When certain power, which had been always in the church, was appointed to ſome under the denomination of biſhops; it is plainly implied, that it was not ſo before, but was common to them with preſbyters.

The hiſtory of the period immediately after the death of the apoſtles, being very imperfect, it ſeems hardly poſſible to determine preciſely when this change took place. But it is more than probable, that in the ſecond and third centuries the difference between the biſhop and the preaching preſbyters in a city, was no more than this, that the former was a ſort of continued preſident or moderator among the latter, as his colleagues. Thus, in the ſecond century, Victor biſhop of Rome, writing to Dionyſius, biſhop of Vienna, has theſe words: "The college of the brethren ſalute thee. "Salute the brethren who are with thee in the Lord. Eu- "balus, one of our college, who carries this epiſtle to Vi- "enna, is ready to live and die with thee." What Victor calls *collegium noſtrum*, our college, was the company of fellow-preſbyters (for a college denotes equality) among whom he preſided. Tertullian, who lived a little after the time of Victor, has theſe words: "Certain approved preſ- "byters preſide, who have obtained that honour, not by "price, but by teſtimony." Hence it appears, that theſe preſidents, as to their office, were no other than preſbyters. Origen, who lived after Tertullian, on theſe words in the xiiith chap. of Matthew, *It ſhall not be ſo among you*, has this remark; "Let not thoſe who ſeem to have ſome prece- "dency in the church, act as lords of their brethren, nor "exerciſe power over them." It is no evidence, that Origen was ſatisfied in his own mind, that biſhops were ſuperior in their office to preſbyters; when he reckons them brethren, and leaves no more than a ſeeming precedency to the former. Cyprian, who was biſhop of Carthage in the third century,

century, calls the preſbyters his colleagues; and declares that he could do nothing in the government of the church without them. "None of us, ſays he, is a biſhop of biſhops, or can "force his colleagues to obedience." *Collegæ* in the Latin tongue, which Cyprian uſed, ſignifies perſons who have the ſame charge and enjoy the ſame office. When perſons are ſubject to one another, they are not colleagues. To the ſame purpoſe is the inſcription of Caldonius's epiſtle to Cyprian, "Caldonius to Cyprian and his co-preſbyters, reſiding at Car-"thage."* He immediately adds; "If ye have any thing "to ſignify by common council, write to me." Nay, Auguſtine, long afterward, calls the preſbyters that were with him his colleagues. In an epiſtle of Firmilian, biſhop of Ceſarea, among Cyprian's epiſtles, we have theſe words; "We, the ſeniors and preſidents, ſhould yearly aſſemble to-"gether, for the management of thoſe things that are com-"mitted to our care. All power and intereſt is lodged in "the church, where the elders preſide, who alſo poſſeſs the "power of baptizing, of laying on hands and ordain-"ing." It is obvious that Firmilian does not allow the power of baptiſing to any who have not alſo that of ordaining. Baſil, biſhop of Ceſarea, who was after Firmilian, and died about the year 378, on the words of Chriſt to Peter, "Feed my ſheep," obſerves, "that Chriſt gave an e-"qual power or authority to all paſtors, who were to come "afterwards. And it is a ſign of this, that they bind and "looſe in like manner as he did." In the beginning of the fourth century, Euſebius, biſhop of Ceſarea, ſpeaking of the ordination of Origen ſays, "Theoctiſtus biſhop of Ceſarea, "and Alexander biſhop of Jeruſalem, when they judged "Origen worthy of the higheſt authority and honour, laid "their hands on him, that he might perform the office of a "preſbyter."

In the third, and in the beginning of the fourth century, a biſhop in a city like Rome or Carthage, appears to have been one who preſided in the meeting of his colleagues. But thoſe called the country biſhops appear to have been ſtill no more than the paſtors of their reſpective congregations. The biſhops which are ſaid to have been in the Roman

* Cypriano et compreſbyteris Carthagini conſiſtentibus Caldonius.

man province of Africa could be no other. At a conference which Auguſtine and the biſhops of that province had with the Donatiſts, there were two hundred and eighty-ſix biſhops preſent, and one hundred and twenty abſent; and two ſees were then vacant; which makes in all four hundred and eight; beſides two hundred and ſeventy-nine Donatiſt biſhops. Juſtin Martyr's Προεστως, preſident of the brethren, is allowed to be ſuch a biſhop as was, at the ſame time, the ordinary paſtor of a congregation.

We cannot now be particular in tracing the progreſs of Epiſcopacy. But there were eſpecially two ſteps, by which the increaſe of this corruption was haſtened, till it attained its height in the papal domination. The firſt was the aboliſhing of the country biſhops, and the ſubjection of the country preſbyters to the biſhop of the adjacent city. For obtaining this end, ſeveral canons were enacted. Thus, in the provincial ſynod of Laodicea, about the year 364, it was decreed, that biſhops ought not to be ordained in villages or ſmall towns, leſt the name of biſhop ſhould be brought into contempt; but in remarkable cities, whence they were to derive their name; and viſitors were appointed, whom the biſhop of each city was to ſend as his vicars, to inſpect the remote country places under his juriſdiction. The other ſtep was the ſuperiority which theſe city biſhops obtained over one another, according to the eminence of the cities from which their dioceſes were denominated. Thus, by the ſeventeenth canon of the council of Antioch, it was decreed, that, on account of the great confluence of people to that city, its biſhops ſhould have the pre-eminence above others. A new plan of government in the church was now propoſed, reſembling that of the ſtate. In conſequence of the adoption of this plan, the biſhop of Rome ſoon began to be acknowledged as the greateſt biſhop in the world.

Thirdly, *Not only preſbyters, or elders, who labour in word and doctrine, but alſo ſuch as only rule, belong to the ſcriptural conſtitution of the chriſtian church.* For theſe elders, who are to concur with the paſtors in the government of the church, we have a very plain warrant in 1 Tim. v. 17. *Let the elders that rule well be accounted worthy of double honour, eſpecially they who labour in word and doctrine.* Here is a genus, or general, agreeing both to elders that only rule well, and to thoſe that

that not only rule, but also labour in word and doctrine. Here are two participles, προεστωντες and κοπιωντες, each of them accompanied with the article οι. Here are two sorts of elders, plainly distinguished by the discretive particle μαλιστα, especially. I appeal, says Mr. Rutherford, to all the best writers in the Greek language, such as, Demosthenes, Isocrates, Aristophanes, Pindar; and also to the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament; to the whole New Testament; whether one parallel place can be produced, where two participles, so qualified, are to be understood as belonging to the same subject. If any one doubts whether μαλιστα, *especially*, be a discretive particle, denoting different subjects, let him consider the use of it in Tit. i. 11. 1 Tim. iv. 10. v. 8. Gal. vi. 10. Philip. iv. 22. 2 Tim. iv. 13. Some tell us, that the Greek word rendered, *labouring*, signifies remarkably laborious, and that the distinction here is only between elders that are more, and those that are less assiduous in their work. But it is plain, and could not be denied even by Bilson, a most zealous Episcopal writer, that the verb here used denotes that sort of labour which is incumbent on all the rulers of the church, 1 Thes. v. 12. We beseech you to know τους κοπιωντας, those that labour among you, and are over you in the Lord. The opposition here is not between ruling well and labouring; but between ruling well and that particular sort of labouring which is in word and doctrine. Besides, if the apostle had intended to represent the most remarkably severe labour, he would rather have used μοχθεω than κοπιω: The former seems to imply more intense and grievous labour than the latter. We do not say, however, that the latter is never applied to remarkable labour; but that this is not a necessary signification of it. It is even used to signify the least degree of labour; as when our Lord says of the lilies, they toil not, Mat. vi. 28. the meaning is not, that they have not the greatest labour; but that they have not the least. Nor is the gloss of others better, who say, that the latter part of the verse means, that they who rule well are worthy of double honour, chiefly, because, or in regard that they labour in word and doctrine. But if this had been the apostle's meaning, he would have said, as Didoclavius observes, οι μαλιστα κοπιωντες, or, without the article, μαλιστα κοπιωντες,

not μαλιστα οἱ κοπιωντες. Beſides, before we could accede to ſuch a gloſs, it would be neceſſary, firſt, to produce a paſſage out of ſome good author exactly parallel, where there are two participles, each of them attended with an article, where the latter of theſe participles, having μαλιστα before its article, denotes the reaſon of a thing without any difference of the ſubject. And then, ſince the ſenſe, in which Preſbyterians take this word, is, without controverſy, the moſt common, (as is evident from the paſſages already quoted, in which the word μαλιστα is uſed) to eſtabliſh the gloſs now mentioned, it would be alſo requiſite to ſhew, that the connexion of this paſſage with what goes before and follows it, renders ſo unuſual a ſenſe neceſſary in this place. The want of the adverſative particle δε is nothing againſt our conſtruction of this paſſage: It is omitted in ſome of the examples already quoted, as in 1 Tim. iv. 10. where the particle μαλιστα, eſpecially, diſtinguiſhes thoſe who believe from all other men. See alſo Tit. i. 10. But it is objected, that they who rule well are worthy of double honour, that is, of maintenance. Now, ſay our opponents, how does it appear, that they who are inveſted with an office which leaves them at full liberty to follow their worldly buſineſs, ought to be maintained by the church. Anſwer. Though we grant that double, that is, abundant honour (for ſo the word double is to be underſtood, Iſa. xl. 2. Jer. xvii. 18.) ſignifies maintenance, yet that it ſignifies that only cannot be ſhewn. Hence, where maintenance is not neceſſary, double honour may be rendered by other ſuitable expreſſions of the church's reſpect and eſteem. Beſides, the difference ſtated in the text between the elders that only rule, and them who both rule and labour in word and doctrine, implies, that a conſtant maintenance is not ſo neceſſary to the former as to the latter. It is, ſays Didoclavius, as if the apoſtle had ſaid, the elders of the church are worthy of double honour, at leaſt, thoſe who labour in word and doctrine. Theſe, eſpecially, are the oxen who tread out the corn, and who being ſeparated and ſet apart to the work of the goſpel, are not at liberty to follow any other employment for the ſupport of themſelves and families. It muſt be owned, however, that even ruling elders are hereby entitled to maintenance from the church

church in their ſtraits, and to a recompenſe for the avocations from their neceſſary worldly buſineſs, which a due attendance on this office will frequently occaſion. It is true, that ſuch is the negligence of our times, that they do not receive their due. But this will as little make them no church officers, as Paul's receiving no ſtipends from the Corinthians, made him no apoſtle of Chriſt. But while they prefer the ſervice of Chriſt to their private intereſt, they will not be loſers; for God will not forgot the work and labour of love, which they ſhew toward his name.

Such rulers ſeem to be repreſented as diſtinct from the teachers of the word, in 1 Corinth xii. 28. where the abſtract terms, *helps*, *governments*, are put for the concrete, that is, for *helpers*, *governors*. "Thoſe of the preſbyters that "preached not," ſays Thorndyke on this text, "are called "here by the apoſtle governments, and deacons, helps, or aſ- "ſiſtants to the government of preſbyters: So that it is "not to be tranſlated helps in governments, but helps, go- "vernments."

Another paſſage to this purpoſe, is in Rom. xii. 6, 7, 8. where the apoſtle having repreſented the chriſtian church as an organized body, (the members of which are endued with different gifts, and deſigned for different offices, to be exerciſed for the good of the whole) proceeds to give an account of the different orders of ſtanding officers in the church. Theſe he reduces to two general heads, namely, *prophecy* and *miniſtry*; perſons exerciſing the functions expreſſed by theſe words being underſtood. The former is required to *propheſy*, that is, to exerciſe the office of preaching the word, *according to the proportion of faith*; and the latter *to wait on their miniſtring*. Theſe two generals are ſubdivided into certain claſſes. Prophecy comprehends *him that teacheth and him that exhorteth*; a diviſion much the ſame with that of paſtors and teachers in Eph. iv. 11. Under miniſtry we have two claſſes, that of the deacon, or of *him that giveth*, and that of the ruling elder, which is meant by *him that ruleth*.

Whether we ſuppoſe, that this office was inſtituted in order to prevent the apoſtles and paſtors from being too much diverted from the miniſtry of the word, by having the whole burden upon them of inſpecting the manners of the people, and

and exercising discipline, or in order to secure the liberty of the church from the tyranny of an usurping ministry, or that it was instituted for both these ends; the necessity of its continuance is manifest, these ends being requisite in every period of the visible church. The people, as one observes, must always look upon it as a privilege, that no other discipline is exercised on them, than what their own neighbours, as well as their ministers, judge reasonable. Besides, it is one of the appointed means of preserving the purity of church-communion, that the power of admitting to, and of excluding from, sealing ordinances, is not in the hands of one, but of many office-bearers.

These observations on the office of an elder, may not be improperly concluded in the words of an ancient commentator, on the first epistle to Timothy. "Age," says he, "is "honourable among all nations: Whence, first the synagogue, and, afterwards, the church had elders; without "whose counsel nothing was done in the church. By what "negligence it is fallen into disuse, I know not; unless it "be through the sloth or rather pride of the doctors, "whilst they would have none esteemed of any consequence "but themselves."

Fourthly, *The office of deacons, according to the scripture account of their institution, was to serve tables or manage the poor's stock.* Where there is such a stock, and many poor to be relieved, the ordination of deacons, in a congregation, is requisite. But they are not, in all cases, essential to the constitution of a gospel church, their office being included in that of elders. The Episcopalians hold, that it belongs to the office of deacon to preach and baptise. Stephen, say they, preached, and Philip preached and baptised. But these examples are nothing to their purpose, unless they could shew that Stephen and Philip preached as deacons, or by virtue of that office. As for Stephen, he did no more in his apology, than what any of the witnesses of Christ, brought before rulers, ought to do. In such a case, even a woman ought to confess Christ, though she may not exercise the office of a preacher, 1 Corinth. xiv. 34. As to Philip, he was an evangelist, Act. xxi. 8. To which office he was, no doubt, promoted, after he had exercised the office of a deacon well: For, says the apostle, "they who do so, purchase to themselves

themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."

Fifthly, *It is grossly absurd for any particular church to acknowledge a civil magistrate as her head, or as having the power of judging and determining matters that belong peculiarly to the doctrine, worship or discipline of the church.* The king is acknowledged as the supreme head or governor on earth, of the churches of England and Ireland, and the judge of all ecclesiastical causes in the last resort. The principle of this ecclesiastical supremacy ought to be rejected with abhorrence, by the whole church of Christ. The officers and other members of the church are members of civil society; and, as such, they are as much subject to the authority and jurisdiction of the civil magistrate as any other. But the church is the kingdom of Christ, *a kingdom which is not of this world.* The civil magistrate has received no commission to exercise authority in that kingdom. All the ministrations of church-officers ought to be in Christ's name. In these matters they are not the servants of men, but of Christ alone.

Sixthly, *It is unwarrantable for office-bearers of the church to accept, in ordinary cases, civil offices and preferments.* It is utterly unbecoming the ministers of Christ to appear, like the bishops in the English parliament, as temporal lords and legislators in the state. In the patriarchal age, instances of the same person being invested with both civil and ecclesiastical authority, seem to have been more frequent. Thus, Melchizedic was both a king and a priest. But when God gave the people of Israel the form of a state, and also that of a church, he appointed each of them to have its proper officers; nor could the same person ordinarily and regularly bear office both in the one and in the other. Priests and Levites were officers in the church; kings and judges in the state. We have seen that they had distinct civil and ecclesiastical courts, Deut. xvii. and 2 Chron. xix. We allow, that the tribe of Levi, being increased to great multitudes, as many of them were distributed into classes, as were sufficient for the divine service; the rest, even in the more pure and incorrupt periods, were employed as officers in the state; but it does not appear, that any, belonging to the classes now mentioned, were so employed.

We

We acknowledge, too, that when the church and commonwealth had fallen into a ſtate of great diſorder, the ſame perſon was ſometimes raiſed up extraordinarily to act in a civil and in an eccleſiaſtical character. Thus Samuel was a Levite, a prophet, and a judge. And in the degenerate times of the Jewiſh church, between Judas Maccabees and the coming of Chriſt, the prieſts were often aſpiring to civil preferments. Beſides, much of the order that obtained in the Jewiſh ſtate, was of a temporary nature, as connected with the ceremonial and typical diſpenſation of the Old Teſtament, and on that account, every inſtance among them of the prieſts acting in a civil capacity, is not an example for the imitation of chriſtian paſtors. We may learn, however, even from the conſtitution of Iſrael, that, in general, the affairs of the church and of the ſtate, being of a different nature, ought to have different adminiſtrators. But we are taught more fully by the example of Chriſt and his apoſtles, how the miniſters of the word ought to conduct themſelves with regard to ſtate matters. Our Lord Jeſus declined the buſineſs of determining a diſpute about an inheritance, as foreign to his office, Luke xii. 24. Upon the ſame principle, he refuſed to paſs ſentence on the adulterous woman, John viii. He would not permit one to delay preaching the goſpel at his call, even for the ſake of (what the law of nature might ſeem to require) attending the funeral of a deceaſed parent, Luke ix. 59, 60. But what would he ſay to thoſe who do not ſcruple to poſtpone that work for the ſake of an unneceſſary attendance on parliaments and civil judicatures. The apoſtles, while they continued at Jeruſalem after the day of Pentecoſt, declared, that they judged their office required them to be diſengaged as much as poſſible from ſecular buſineſs, when they appointed the ſeven deacons, Acts vi. 2, 3, 4. The apoſtle Paul teaches us, that the paſtors of the church ought to give themſelves wholly to the work of the miniſtry, 1 Tim. iv. 15. and that as the ſtrictneſs of the Roman diſcipline required, that no one who was enliſted as a ſoldier, ſhould engage in huſbandry, trade, or any other occupation, that would hinder him from a conſtant and exact execution of the orders of his commander; ſo miniſters of the goſpel ought to beware of ſecular engagements,

gagements, whether public or private; since they have been separated to the work of the gospel, and owe their time and all their talents to him, who says, *Feed my sheep*, 2 Tim. ii. 4.*

Of Public Covenanting.

The soldiers who receive their wages from Cesar, swear, that they will never prefer any thing to his interest. And will you not swear to God, whose bounty is incomparably greater than Cesars. *Arrianus.*

I. PUBLIC Covenanting is a joint act of the members of a particular church, by which they declare their adherence to the Lord as their God in Christ, and their resolution, through grace, to believe and obey his word, and, particularly, to hold fast any measure of real reformation that has been already attained, and to strive against all contrary errors and corruptions.

We have many examples of public covenanting recorded in scripture: It was practised in the times of Moses, Joshuah, Hezekiah, Josiah, Nehemiah. It is enjoined as the duty of the church of God, Psal. lxxvi. 11. *Vow and pay unto the Lord your God.* It is urged, however, that it was a peculiarity of the Old Testament dispensation. But if it was so, it must have belonged either to the judicial or to the ceremonial law. It could not belong to the judicial law; for that respected their civil polity, not the manner or form of religious worship. Nor to the ceremonial; for it cannot at all be considered

* The reader who desires to see a fuller discussion of the Episcopal controversy, may be referred to Calderwood's Altare Damascenum, the writings of Mr. William Jameison of Glasgow, and others.

conſidered as among thoſe things, carnal and unprofitable in themſelves, which were types or ſhadows of good things to come. How can it be denied to be a moral duty, ſince, with regard to the matter of it, (namely, our avouching the Lord to be our God in Chriſt, and our engaging in the ſtrength of promiſed grace, to cleave to him, and to walk in all his commandments and ordinances blameleſs) it is a duty required in the firſt commandment of the moral law; and with regard to the form of it, (that is, ſwearing by the glorious and fearful name of the Lord our God) it is a duty required in the third commandment? It is ſet forth in ſcripture prophecy as an exerciſe in which the New Teſtament church was to be engaged. We have a remarkable paſſage to this purpoſe in Iſai. xix. 18, 21. *In that day*, when an altar ſhould be to the Lord, not at Jeruſalem, the only place where an altar was warrantable after the building of the temple to the end of the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, but in the land of Egypt, ver. 19. and when the Lord of hoſts ſhould *bleſs, ſaying, Bleſſed be Egypt my people, and Aſſyria the work of my hands*, ver. 25. that is, in the New Teſtament-day, *five cities in the land of Egypt ſhall ſpeak the language of Canaan*, ſhall make a pure confeſſion of Chriſt's truth; yea, they ſhall make it, on proper occaſions, with the ſolemnity of an oath; *they ſhall ſwear to the Lord of hoſts. They ſhall vow a vow unto the Lord, and perform it.* See alſo Iſai. xliv. 5. It is true, that ſome expreſſions uſed in theſe prophecies, as *altar, ſacrifices*, &c. muſt be underſtood, not literally, but figuratively, New Teſtament-worſhip being thus ſet forth under the names of what belonged to the ancient ceremonial worſhip. But it will not follow, that *ſwearing to the Lord*, which never was any ceremonial uſage, is to be underſtood figuratively, or otherwiſe than *knowing the Lord and crying to him*, mentioned in the ſame paſſage.

Such as allow the duty of *perſonal* covenanting, are chargeable with inconſiſtency in their oppoſition to public covenanting. For if one perſon may enter into a covenant of duty and gratitude, why may not two, three, or any greater number, do ſo? Surely the perfection of the divine law requires the public as well as the private performance of a duty, if the nature of the duty admit both. But that covenanting with God may be practiſed by us, in our public and

and joint capacity, cannot be doubted; since we know that it hath been actually so practised with the divine approbation.

Nor can they be free from the charge of inconsistency, who oppose public covenanting; and yet grant that it is a duty, as implied in baptism and the Lord's supper. It is a general truth, that whatever is a duty as implied in other duties, and hath been distinctly and formally practised by the church of God, may still, on proper occasions, be so practised. We know, that covenanting, under the Old Testament, was as much implied in circumcision and the passover, as it can be supposed to be now in baptism and the Lord's supper. And yet the church was then bound to practice it distinctly, or by itself. It is therefore a grievous inconsistency, to say of public covenanting, that it is a duty as implied in baptism and the Lord's supper, and yet no duty as practised distinctly and by itself.

In fine, many of the oppofers of public covenanting, profess adherence to the Westminster Assembly's Larger Catechism, as agreeable to the holy scriptures. Now, according to that form of sound words, one of the ordinances of Christ, distinct from the sacraments, which we are required by the second commandment, to receive, observe, keep pure and entire, is "vowing" or swearing to the Lord.

II. Public covenanting is seasonable at present. If it is now our duty to maintain a particular testimony against the errors and corruptions which overflow the visible church, then it is now our duty to practice public covenanting.—In regard that this is one way in which the church of God has been in use to maintain a testimony against particular evils at the time of their prevalence. Thus, the people of God in Asa's reign, testified against idolatry, 2 Chron. xv. and after the Babylonish captivity, against the intermarriages of the Israelites with heathens, Ezra x. 2, 3, 4, 5. against buying on the sabbath the wares or victuals which the people of the land might bring to them on that holy day; against the vigorous exactions of debts, Neh. x. 29, 31. In regard that it is a mean of promoting the stedfast adherence of church-members to such a testimony, amidst the temptations to lukewarmness and wavering, with which they are surrounded. So the covenanting of Israel at Ho-

reb is repreſented in Deut. iv. 9, 13. *Only take heed to thyſelf, and keep thy ſoul diligently, leſt thou forget the things which thine eyes have ſeen, and leſt they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life, but teach them thy ſons and thy ſons ſons, eſpecially the day that thou ſtoodeſt before the Lord thy God in Horeb.* In regard that it is a proper mean of aſcertaining the ſincerity, reſolution, and unanimity of the covenanters, in holding their teſtimony againſt the evils which now prevail, to one another, to other parts of the viſible church, and to ſuch as obſtinately perſiſt in the evils teſtified againſt. In regard that this way of confeſſing Chriſt, as king in Zion, is a piece of homage due to him, eſpecially at a time when his name or authority, as ſtamped upon many of his truths or inſtitutions, is generally denied. Philip. ii, 9, 11. *God hath highly exalted him, that every tongue ſhould confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the glory of God the father;* compared with Iſai. xlv. 23. *I have ſworn by myſelf, that unto me, every tongue ſhall ſwear.*

III. The people of Iſrael, having entered into a ſolemn covenant of duty and gratitude at Sinai, the Lord dealt with them ever afterward as under covenant obligation; ſtill repreſenting their departures from him, as having the aggravation of covenant-breaking. It is obſervable, that in Ezek. xvi. 59. the Lord charges Iſrael at the time of the Babyloniſh captivity, with deſpiſing the oath and breaking the covenant, even the covenant, mentioned in the 8th ver. of that chapter, which they had entered into when they came out of Egypt. He charges them with the breach of that covenant, in the ſame terms which Zedekiah, in the 18th ver. of the next chapter, is charged with breaking the oath which he had perſonally taken to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. That the continuing obligation of the covenant of duty, entered into by the people of Iſrael, was no peculiarity of the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, but the ſame ſort of obligation which ariſes from a covenant entered into by any particular church under the New Teſtament, appears by conſidering, that the obligation was founded in two things: 1. In the continuing obligation of the matter of the covenant. With regard to thoſe things to which we are under a primary and perpetual obligation by the moral law, it is plain, that the ſecondary or ſubordinate obligation

ligation to such things, arising from our solemn engagements, must be perpetual. 2. In the nature of a particular society, of a church or nation; as it continues the same society, notwithstanding the continual succession of members. These two things being the same under the New Testament dispensation, that they were under the Old, the continuing obligation of a covenant of duty entered into by a particular church, must be the same.

Why are the people of Britain still to be considered as under the obligation of these covenants, which were entered into by the church of Christ there, about the middle of last century? We answer, because the people who entered into them were such as might, by their number and stations, properly represent the nation. To assert, that the obligation of these covenants, (as it was held by the martyrs who suffered in Scotland between the Restoration and the Revolution, and by those who have since espoused their testimony for the principles of the Reformation,) is no other than an obligation arising from acts of Parliament in their favour, or from the established connexion in Britain between the church and state, argues either great ignorance of the subject or great malevolence. These covenants were still understood to be obligatory on the people of Britain, on account of their having actually entered into them; a fact, which is quite independent on acts of Parliament, or the established connexion between church and state.

Even in the United States of America, a particular church, the majority of whose ministry and members, have, either themselves or their ancestors, come from Britain or Ireland, since the covenanting period now referred to, is justly considered as under the obligation of these covenants.

When the members of a particular church are thus already under the obligation of a covenant for religion and reformation, their subsequent acts of covenanting ought still to include (as did the instances of covenanting in Israel after the time of Moses) an acknowledgement of the obligation arising from the solemn covenant-engagements formerly entered into; a confession of sins, both as breaches of God's law, and as breaches of covenant; and a renewed engagement to duty adapted to present circumstances.* Of

* See Mr. Morison's Present Duty; where the scripture doctrine of public covenanting is set in a very clear and convincing light.

Of Occasional Preaching.

No one can warrantably exercise the office of a minister without being called. For as civil offices require a lawful call, so do ecclesiastical. *Leidecker.**

IT is usual in this country for congregations, even of those denominated Presbyterians, to meet on the Lord's day for public worship, while no one appears among them in the character of a person regularly called to preach the gospel. The meeting is as public, and there is the same access for all sorts of people to attend it, as when a minister preaches. On these occasions, some leading men select a psalm or hymn to be sung, pray, read a portion of scripture, or deliver discourses or exhortations on such religious subjects as occur.

Thus, while there is nothing extraordinary in the state of the church to justify a departure from the order which Christ hath appointed to be ordinarily observed, persons, who do not pretend to have any call to the ministry, take upon them to exercise their gifts publicly, to be the mouth of God to the people in the public delivery of his word, and to be the mouth of the people to God in public prayer.

This practice is justly disapproved of for such reasons as the following:

I. The public preaching by which faith comes, is the preaching of it by those that are sent of God: This is evident from Rom. x. 14. *How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? How shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? How shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent? According as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things. So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

* Ministrorum peculiare munus nemo ulla ratione obire potest, nisi legitime vocatus. Uti enim politica munera requirunt vocationem, sic etiam ecclesiastica. *Leidecker.*

God. Here it is plainly taught, that, as faith, or believing in the Lord, is connected with the public preaching of the word; the latter being an ordinary standing mean of beginning and increasing the former; so it is the public preaching of the word connected with a divine mission: that is, no public preaching is to be accounted an ordinary standing mean of begetting and increasing faith, but such as is exercised by those who are sent and commissioned by Christ.

Some would represent this mission, or sending, as no other than a person's gifts or fitness for teaching. But it is plain, that the qualifications necessary for an office of the church, whether ordinary or extraordinary, were always distinct from the divine call to it. Thus, what we read in Jer. i. 5. *I sanctified thee; I ordained thee a prophet*, and in ver. 7. *Thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee, thou shalt speak*, is to be understood of Jeremiah's mission. But the words which we have in ver. 9. *Then the Lord put forth his hand and touched my mouth; and the Lord said unto me, Behold I have put my words into thy mouth*; point out his qualifications for the office of a prophet. When Christ breathed on the disciples, he communicated the gift of the Holy Spirit. But when he said to them, *Go and teach; as my Father sent me, so send I you*; he gave them an authoritative commission. When it is said, *The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, Ezekiel*, or the other prophets; it means, that the Lord gave them not only ability,* but also authority† to prophesy. The latter of these is still necessary, as well as the former; and, though God does not now give ministers a commission, by an immediate voice from heaven, or in a vision, there is an ordinary way in which he gives them one, that is, the way of being duly examined and solemnly set apart to the office by a presbytery, 1 Tim. iv. 14. *Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophesy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.* ver. 22. *Lay hands suddenly on no man.* Tit. i. 5. *I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldest ordain elders in every city.* The notion, that the possession of gifts is sufficient, without any divine call or mission, to warrant a person to dispense

* Δυναμις. † Εξεσια.

the word publicly, is quite inconsistent with the scriptural representations of the public dispensers of the word. They are stewards of the mysteries of God, 1 Cor. iv. 1. But surely none, however qualified, would be allowed to act as a steward in a well regulated family, without a commission from the head of it. They are ambassadors for Christ, 2 Cor. v. 20. But no one, whatever his political knowledge and ability may be, can justly act as an ambassador from any civil power, without being authorized by that power.

Some urge, that a person, who has not yet received a formal outward call, may have an inward call to speak the word in public. But with regard to this inward call, we may observe, that if it consist in the singleness of his views, and a prevailing inclination to serve Christ, and do good to souls, it more properly belongs to the qualifications or fitness for the office, but cannot supersede the necessity of a regular call. On the other hand, if this inward call be some unaccountable impulse or impression on the mind, leading the person to disregard the external order of the house of God, there is reason to be apprehensive, that it is a delusion of Satan. Besides, hearers are to receive ministers as sent by Christ. Therefore the mission of ministers must be something which the hearers can know and judge of. But they cannot do so with regard to a call which lies in secret and inward impressions on the mind.

II. In the ordinary constituted state of the church, those who are warranted to dispense the word publicly, are such as ought to give themselves to reading, 1 Tim. iv. 15, 16. Such as ought to watch that they may speak suitably to the various cases of their hearers, 2 Tim. ii. 15. Matth. xxiv. 45, 46. Such as ought to beware of entangling themselves in any other calling, 2 Tim. ii. 4. All this is manifestly inconsistent with the duty of private church-members, who have worldly callings, which they ought to follow with fidelity and industry. Hence it is by no means becoming for private church-members to be public dispensers of the word.

III. The practice in question, takes away the distinction between the exercise of gifts in the way of a public office, and the exercise of them in a private way. The heads of families are to dispense the word to their children, and others

others under their charge, Gen. xviii. 19. Isa. xxxviii. 19. and fellow-christians to one another in private conference, Col. iii. 16. Mal. iii. 16. Zech. viii. 21. Heb. iii. 13. Private meetings for joint prayer, and spiritual conference, are highly commendable. But all this is quite distinct from the dispensation of the word in the way of office; that is, a dispensation of it in public, directed to all men, Matth. xxviii. 19. *Go, teach all nations.* Mark. xvi. 15. *Go ye into all the world: Preach the gospel to every creature;* with ministerial authority, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Tit. ii. 15. by such as, upon trial, have had this truth committed to them by the office-bearers of his house, 2 Tim. ii. 2. The scripture makes a plain distinction between public ordinances and the private exercises of his worship, Psalm lxxxvii. 2. *The Lord loveth the gates of Zion, more than all the dwellings of Jacob.*

IV. This practice is contrary to the principles of the reformation, exhibited in the Confession of Faith, the Catechisms, and the Form of Presbyterial Church Government, agreed on by the Westminster Assembly. Larger Catechism, in the answer to Quest. 156. "All are not to be permitted "to read the word publicly to the congregation;" that is, as Mr. Fisher rightly explains it in his Catechism, "None "ought to read publicly to the congregation, except those "whose office it is, not only to read the word of God, but "to explain it to the edification of others, Neh. viii. 8." In the Form of Presbyterial Church Government, that venerable assembly says, "It belongs to the office of the pastor, "to pray for and with his flock, as the mouth of the people "unto God. He ought to perform this in the public exe- "cution of his office, as a part thereof. It belongs to his "office to read the scriptures publicly; and to feed his "flock by the preaching of the word; according to which "he is to teach, convince, reprove, exhort, and comfort."

What we have now said, as to the unlawfulness of private christians doing what belongs to the office of the ministry, is to be understood with reference to a constituted state of the church; or with reference to a state of the church which is so corrupt and confused, that there is no regular or sound public ministry; as was the case, in a great measure, during the height of Antichrist's reign. In such a state of the church,

church, perſons might be under a neceſſity of acting for the relief of their fellow-chriſtians in a way which would be quite unwarrantable, where there is a regular miniſtry. Thus, under the Old Teſtament, before the giving of the law, perſons might build altars and offer ſacrifices any where; but afterwards, there was no legitimate offering of ſacrifices but at the tabernacle or the temple. Before men have entered into the ſtate of civil ſociety, any perſon may inflict even capital puniſhment, for crimes which manifeſtly render it neceſſary for the ſafety of themſelves and others; a thing which, in civil ſociety, being wholly intruſted to the civil magiſtrate, no private perſon may take upon him to do.

The prophets ſpoken of in 1 Corinth. xiv. were among the officers that God gave to the New Teſtament church, 1 Corinth. xii. 28. Epheſ. iv. 4. In a former eſſay we ſpoke of the nature of their office. When the apoſtle ſays in 1 Corinth. xiv. 31. *ye may all propheſy*, the expreſſion muſt be underſtood of all that were called to that office, (with whom, it ſeems, the church of Corinth abounded; not of perſons out of office. From the times of Moſes and Samuel, it appears that the prophet was ſtill a perſon inveſted with an office. Deut. xviii. 18. 1 Sam. iii. 20. As to the note of univerſality, *all*, it is eaſy to produce abundance of paſſages where it muſt be taken in a reſtricted ſenſe, according to the nature of the ſubject, Luke. ii. 1. John ii. 10. &c. The reaſon of the uſe of it here is plain; namely, that they might all propheſy ſucceſſively, in oppoſition to their ſpeaking together in a confuſed diſorderly manner.

It is objected, that chriſtians are bound to edify one another in love; and therefore they ſhould exhort and comfort one another publicly.

Anſwer. We deny the conſequence; women are bound to love one another, and to exhort and edify one another, Tit. ii. 3, 4. yet they are expreſly forbidden to ſpeak in public. 1 Corinth. xiv. 34. 1 Tim. ii. 12. The ſame act which is duty in one perſon, may be a heinous ſin in another. To ſupport the ark, and to burn incenſe unto the Lord, were acceptable ſervices in the prieſts; but in Uzzah and Uzziah were highly criminal, and brought upon both the one and the other a ſignal mark of the Divine diſpleaſure. Theſe are ſet up as monuments to warn all ſucceeding

ing generations of the tremendous hazard of meddling in sacred things without a divine call or warrant.

Farther, it is alleged, that when the private persons, of whom we speak, deliver in public what they judge to be edifying, it is only in the way of exhortation: They do not preach; they pretend not to explain scripture; or to teach with ministerial authority.

Answer. We ought to say nothing about the things of God, but what is the sense, if not the very words, of scripture. There are various modes or ways in which the word may be spoken, such as those of affirming, denying, reasoning, explaining particular words or phrases in the scriptures, counselling, exhorting, reproving. But the public dispensation of the word, which belongs to the ministry, comprehends all these modes of declaring the word. The office of a minister in preaching the word, as the Westminster assembly observes, is to teach, convince, reprove, exhort and comfort. As the priest said to Uzziah, *Not unto thee does it appertain to burn incense unto the Lord; but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense.* So there is good ground to say to private persons who take upon them to declare the word of God in public: Not unto you does it appertain either to explain the doctrines or to exhort to the duties of God's word, in the ordinary public worship of the church; but unto the pastors and teachers, who are regularly called and set apart to the office and work of feeding the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood.

This paper may be concluded with a quotation from a valuable writer, containing an answer to what has been offered as arguments for lay-preaching, from two passages of scripture. One of these passages is Acts viii. 1, 4. *At that time, there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad through the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. Therefore they that were scattered abroad, went every where preaching the word.* Hence it has been urged, "That not "delegated preachers, but the church in general, pro- "claimed to their fellow sinners the gospel of the Lord "Jesus." Were this passage literally interpreted, it would follow, that the apostles remained at Jerusalem, without having

having any church to which they could minister. For it is said, that all were scattered abroad, except the apostles. Hence, the *all*, is here, as in many other places, to be understood in a limited sense. The limitation of this language to the ordinary teachers, is favoured by a concurrence of circumstances. The very mention that is made of the apostles, naturally suggests this idea. Why are they alone mentioned, when we are certain, that many others remained at Jerusalem; if it be not to inform us, that they were the only ministers of the word who remained there? The particle here rendered *except*, intimates, either that the apostles were the only persons belonging to the church, who continued at Jerusalem, or that they were the only persons who did so, of one description, that is, invested with the character of public teachers. It is not said of those who were scattered, that they went *teaching*, but that they *went preaching the word*; a phrase which, in other places of scripture, is constantly used with respect to persons in office. When it is said, that *they who were scattered abroad, went every where preaching the word*, the inspired writer instantly adds; *Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.* Is it not most natural to conclude, that they who *went every where preaching the word*, were persons intrusted with official character, as Philip was? Is there any reason for supposing that he had any private christians associated with him in the work of the ministry. The Doctors Gill and Guyse, though both Independents, understood the *all* here, of the ordinary teachers.

Great stress has been laid on the example of Apollos, Acts xviii. 24. 28. It has indeed been asserted, that he passed over to Achaia to preach, because he was *so disposed*. But this is not a fair inference from the language of the inspired historian. It is an obvious fallacy. An important link is left out. The inclination of Apollos to go into Achaia, and his passing thither to preach, are not immediately connected. For in ver. 27. a double connexion is stated, first, between his inclination and the recommendation of the brethren; and then, between his actually passing into Achaia and his success in preaching there. He did not *pass into Achaia to preach there*, merely because he was so *disposed*: But because he was disposed to go thither, *the brethren wrote*,

wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him. Now, it is highly probable, that these brethren were the elders of the church of Ephesus; especially as there is such a change of the term, as seems to denote, that a distinction is stated between them and the church-members in general to whom they wrote. *The brethren* wrote exhorting *the disciples.* If this be the proper sense of the term, we have here the essentials of a mission. Apollos was, in the most strict sense of the term, a minister; for he is so designed by the Spirit of inspiration. He was, no less than Paul, a minister of Christ, and steward of the mysteries of God. The eloquence and fervency of Apollos are not mentioned as the reason of his speaking and teaching; but of his doing so diligently.*

Of Occasional Hearing.

They continued stedfastly in the apostle's doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer.† *Acts of the Apostles.*

IT is inquired, whether the members of a church, which is in a state of separation from another church, may, without sin, occasionally attend on the administration of public ordinances in that other church?

It

* See this subject more fully treated, in Dr. Jamieson's excellent Remarks on Rowland Hill's Journal.

† Here *doctrine* is, by the Spirit of inspiration, so intimately connected with fellowship, as necessarily to teach, that there is a real fellowship in doctrine. The same thing must be said with respect to prayer. There is undoubtedly a fellowship in public prayers. Whoever attends public worship in any church, appears there as joining in the public prayers for God's blessing to that church, in that extent in which they are ordinarily presented. Doctrine and prayers are here mentioned, not only in the strictest connexion with fellowship, but also with breaking of bread. These are all thrown together, to intimate that they are not properly separable.——See a sensible letter on Bigotry, in the Christian Magazine, printed at Edinburgh, for December 1798.

It is here supposed, that the stated ground of separation between these churches, is the maintainance of some important articles of truth and duty, by the one, which are obstinately rejected by the other. This being the case, we say, it is unwarrantable for the members of the one church to attend upon, or countenance the administration of public ordinances in the other. This we maintain for such reasons as the following:

1. This practice is contrary to all these passages of scripture which enjoin us to beware not only of false doctrine, but its teachers. We are enjoined to *mark such as cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which we have learned, and to avoid them.** Nothing is plainer, than that they who teach those doctrines, and justify those corruptions, which render a state of separation necessary, *are causing divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which we have learned;* and are therefore to be *avoided;* that is, we are not to countenance their public administrations, lest we be chargeable with countenancing the corrupt schemes, whereby they cause divisions and offences.

2. The attendance of church-members on the dispensation of public ordinances, in a church, from which they are in a state of separation, is inconsistent with the weight and importance of a warrantable separation. If that separation were warrantable, which is only on account of the greater convenience of attending on public ordinances, or of something more pleasing in the style or delivery of the preacher, we might then, upon the absence of the ordinary pastor, attend on the ministry of one of another communion, though his gifts were not so agreeable, nor his situation so convenient: But a separation of that sort, would sacrifice the peace and unity of the church to private convenience and humour; would harden persons, whose evil character, in Jude xix. is, that they *separate themselves;* and must be abhorred by every man of principle and conscience. But a warrantable separation is a quite different affair: The grounds of it are so weighty, as to render an occasional, as well as a stated attendance on the public ordinance of the church communion, from which we are in a state of separation, unwarrantable.

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* Rom. xvi. 17.

3. An occasional attendance on public administrations, in a church-communion, from which we are in a state of separation, tends to subvert the order and discipline of the church of Christ. It cannot be denied, that the errors and offences of those church-communions, from which we are justly in a state of separation, being open violations of God's law obstinately persisted in, are in their own nature sufficient ground of church-censure. But how does the holy scripture direct us to behave towards those who are the proper objects of church-censure? It certainly directs us to behave to them in such a manner as may be expressive of the sense we have of the evil of their ways; in such a manner as may make them ashamed; in such a manner as is directly contrary to the countenance given to corrupt church-communions, by our attending on their public administrations: 2 Thes. iii. 6. *Now we command you, brethren, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received from us.* ver. 14. *And if any man obey our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.* There are two ways in which a church may censure even those who are out of her communion. The first is, by a judicial and authoritative condemnation of their errors and corruptions. Thus Zion is said to *condemn in judgment every tongue that riseth up against her.* The second way is by the contrariety of her pure profession and holy practice to the profession and practice of others.

4. Occasional attendance on the public administrations of a church-communion, from which we are warrantably in a state of separation, does not comport with that watchfulness and jealousy over our own hearts, which are so suitable to our condition in the militant church. For these are administrations in which it is acknowledged by the persons we are speaking of, there is much of *the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge;* if not in what is actually delivered in their hearing, at least, in the profession of religion which is made in such a church-communion, and to which all the public administrations there are in a designed subservience. Many do not scruple to attend on the administration of false teachers, being apprehensive of no danger from them; for, say they, we are not so ignorant as not to know what is

to be received as true, and what is to be rejected as falſe. To ſuch we ſay, the Lord forbids you not only to *believe* the inſtruction that cauſeth to err, but even to *hear* it, Prov. xix. 27. he commands you to ceaſe from giving even an outward attention to it: And, therefore, in your attendance thereon, you are manifeſtly going out of the Lord's way; you are trampling on his authority. And while you are doing ſo, your confidence that you ſhall not be ſeduced, is but vain preſumptuous leaning on your own underſtanding, and you are running a greater riſque, than you would do in eating food mixed with poiſon. Whilſt you are thus venturing out of the plain road of duty, you are in great hazard of being left to follow the bent of your corrupted nature, and to embrace error inſtead of truth. You ſhould conſider, that there is a *helliſh* energy attending error, as well as a heavenly energy attending divine truth; for we read of the *working of Satan with all power, and with all deceivableneſs of unrighteouſneſs in them that periſh.* It is true, that, even when we have the beſt ground to expect a pure diſpenſation of word and ordinances, public ſpeakers are not exempted from inadvertent and unguarded expreſſions: But we are to judge of a diſpenſation of ordinances in any church-communion by the ſcope and tendency of it; and we are to judge of theſe by its peculiar and diſtinguiſhing principles and avowed practice. And according to our judgment, thus formed, we ought, or ought not to attend.*

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* The needleſs reading of erroneous books, that is, of books which are well known to be intended and calculated for the propagation of groſs error, is to be avoided. Yet there is a difference between reading of an erroneous book and attending on the miniſtration of an erroneous teacher; for, Firſt, As it is more eſpecially by the preaching of the word, that church-members are converted and edified; ſo it is more eſpecially by the preaching of error that they are ſeduced. Secondly, In the preaching of error there is a proſtitution of the ſacred office of the miniſtry, which is not in the mere propoſal of opinions in common converſation, or in books. Thirdly, It cannot be pretended, that in the private reading of a book publiſhed by an erroneous teacher, there is any public countenance given to him in the character of a church-officer, or any ſort of church-communion with his followers, as there certainly is, in attending on his public adminiſtrations. Fourthly, The private

5. An occaſional attendance on the public adminiſtrations of a church-communion, from which we are juſtly in a ſtate of ſeparation, is contrary to the due exerciſe of charity towards our fellow church-members; for ſuppoſing, (what we are far from allowing ever to be the caſe in fact) that a church-member had attained ſuch a meaſure of knowledge and eſtabliſhment in the truth, as to be in no danger of receiving hurt to his own ſoul, by his attendance on the public adminiſtrations of the erroneous; yet he cannot but know, that the weaker ſort of his fellow church-members are in great danger, who may be emboldened to attend on the ſame adminiſtrations by his example. Is he not hereby chargeable with putting a ſtumbling block, or an occaſion to fall, in 'his brother's way? This is, properly, in the ſcripture ſenſe, giving offence to our brethren: For giving them offence, is not, as is commonly imagined, diſpleaſing them, but rather being an occaſion of their falling into ſin.

6. An occaſional attendance on the public adminiſtrations, in different and oppoſite church-communions, is contrary to the right manner of attending on goſpel ordinances, which our Lord enjoins upon us, when he ſays, *Take heed how ye hear.* For, in the *firſt* place, this occaſional attendance on ordinances is a ſelf-contradictory attendance. A perſon's attendance on the public ordinances of one church, ſays, he approves of the conſtitution and principles of that church; and that he is *one body, one bread,* with the other members of it; but all this is contradicted by his attendance on the public ordinances of another church, which is in a ſtate of ſeparation from the former. In the *ſecond* place, it is a partial attendance

private reading of books is of the nature of that private communication of ſentiments to one another, which is previouſly neceſſary in order to a ſtate of church-communion. Thus, reading is a proper mean of acquiring the information which is needful to determine us whether we ought to join in ſuch a particular church-communion or not. If we find, in the uſe of this and other means, that we ought not to attend on the public adminiſtrations of any particular church, we ſhould, according to the opportunities of our place and ſtation, warn others of the danger of attending on them. Hence the examination of erroneous books, ſo far as it is performed with honeſty and judgment, is a real ſervice to the church of Chriſt.

attendance on ordinances. When perſons, in the ſuppoſed caſe, attend on the public adminiſtrations of a church-communion, from which they are in a ſtate of ſeparation, they are chargeable with putting aſunder what God hath joined together, namely, the preaching of the word and the diſpenſation of the ſacraments. Where will they find a divine warrant to receive one as authorized to preach the word to them, from whom it is unwarrantable to receive the ſacraments; or to join in communion with a particular church in her public exerciſes of divine worſhip, as prayer, praiſe, and hearing the word preached, while it is unwarrantable to join with the ſame church in baptiſm and the Lord's ſupper? Paul appears to repreſent the public and authoritative diſpenſation of the word as the principal part of the truſt that was committed to him as a miniſter of Chriſt, 1 Corinth. i. 17. *Chriſt ſent me not to baptiſe, but to preach*, Eph. iii. 8. *Unto me, who am leſs than the leaſt of all ſaints, is this grace given, that I ſhould preach among the Gentiles the unſearchable riches of Chriſt.* In the *third* place, the occaſional attendance on the adminiſtrations of different church-communions, is, from the nature of it, apt to be proſtituted to carnal purpoſes. This ſort of attendance is not neceſſary to the enjoyment of the goſpel and its ordinances, in purity and ſimplicity: For theſe may be had in a ſtedfaſt adherence to *one* church-communion. But the great inducement to that ſort of attendance, is, that thereby men's vain curioſity, or fondneſs for ſomething new in the gifts of a ſpeaker, or in his manner of addreſs, is gratified: On this account, men *heap up to themſelves teachers, having itching ears.* Nay, perſons are often induced to this ſort of attendance out of complaiſance to their friends or neighbours; or becauſe, according to the atheiſtical temper of the preſent age, it is accounted a mark of liberality and enlargement of mind. In the *fourth* place, ſome give evidence, that they make an idol of ordinances, by their attendance on them in church communions from which they are in a ſtate of ſeparation. This is the caſe of thoſe, who do not ſcruple to turn aſide from the path of duty, to what they cannot deny to be ſinful, for the ſake, as they pretend, of the public ordinances.

Of

Of the Light which is ſaid to be riſing on the Church with regard to the Duty of Singing in Solemn Worſhip.

To the law and to the teſtimony, if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them. *Iſaiah.*

A LIGHT is ſaid to be now riſing on the church, by which, we are told, it appears, that the ſinging of the book of pſalms, is wholly, or in part, to be laid aſide from the ſolemn worſhip of the church of God, as unſuitable to the New Teſtament diſpenſation; that chriſtians ought to make pſalms for the uſe of the church in her ſolemn worſhip; and that they ought to eſteem pſalms, thus compoſed by themſelves, as more proper to be ſung in New Teſtament worſhip, than thoſe which are to be found in the Old Teſtament.*

It is allowed, that the church may receive an increaſe of light with regard to truth and duty; but as there is both a true and a falſe light, it behoves us carefully to diſtinguiſh the one from the other; for the latter is groſs darkneſs. The following differences between them ought to be obſerved:

1. The true light carries conviction to the conſciences of men, as being no other than the light of God's word. Whatever the true light diſcovers as truth or duty, bears this inſcription, *Thus ſaith the Lord*, or, *Thus it is written*. But falſe light always tends to bring us under ſome other influence or authority than that of God ſpeaking in his word. Thus in the preſent caſe, there is no plain ſcripture-warrant for ſetting aſide the ſcripture-ſongs from the ſolemn praiſes of the church, and for ſubſtituting human compoſitions in their place. A great deal, indeed, is ſaid about the ſuitableneſs and advantages of human compoſitions; and about the diſadvantages of the uſe of the ſcripture-ſongs: But is there any ſuch thing written? Does the ſcripture teach us,

* The preface to an Examination, &c.

that we ought not to ſing the book of pſalms? Is this poſition to be found either in the expreſs words of ſcripture, or in neceſſary conſequences ariſing from the words? With regard to 1 Cor. xiv. 26. it cannot be pretended to be an inſtance of the ſinging of uninſpired pſalms in the ordinary ſolemn worſhip of the church; nor can the uttering of a pſalm by a New Teſtament prophet, ever, in itſelf, warrant thoſe who are no prophets to dictate pſalms for this purpoſe. The other paſſage in Col. iii. 16. is as little to their purpoſe, while it cannot be ſhewn, that the apoſtle meant *pſalms*, *hymns*, and *ſpiritual ſongs* of human compoſure, to be ſung in the ſolemn and formal worſhip of the church; and while the pſalms indited by the Spirit of God bear titles equivalent to theſe three deſignations.

2. The true light never ſhews us one truth or duty, without ſhewing us its agreement and connexion with the other truths and duties of God's word. The increaſe of true light with regard to any one of them, tends to eſtabliſh us in our adherence to all the reſt. Falſe light, on the contrary, leads us to ſacrifice many truths to one favourite opinion: Thus, in order to ſupport the ſcheme of ſinging human compoſures in ſolemn worſhip, we are forbidden to ſing any pſalm, as the words of David or Aſaph, as deſcribing their own frames or exerciſes, and recorded for our inſtruction. For the ſake of this idol, the Old Teſtament church is given up to abſolute ignorance of the meaning of their own typical worſhip, and of Chriſt himſelf, the bleſſed medium of the communication of ſpiritual bleſſings to their ſouls. For the ſake of this idol, the words of ſcripture are denied to be the words of the Holy Ghoſt.

3. The true light leads us to cleave to whatſoever conformity to the word of God, his church has already attained, in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline, and government; according to his ſolemn charge, *Hold faſt that which thou haſt.* But falſe light leads men to a contempt of ſuch attainments. Thus the light about ſinging hymns of human compoſure in ſolemn worſhip, prevails much among the avowed enemies of Reformation principles; among Methodiſts, Baptiſts, Moravians, &c. The true light will increaſe our regard to the ſcriptural examples and attainments of thoſe who have gone before us. Chriſt directs his people

to

to go forth by the footsteps of the flock, Song i. 8. *to ask for the old paths*, Jer. vi. 16. But false light leads men to disregard and disparage the examples of the church and people of God.

Thus, in the present case, the advocates for the scheme of singing other than the scripture-songs in the solemn worship of the church, make light of the contrariety of their scheme to the profession and practice of our reforming ancestors. But, certainly, there are several things which entitle their example in this matter to a very serious consideration; things which will be found to be very weighty, when the Lord arises to plead his cause with backsliding churches and professors.

1. Our reforming ancestors in Britain and Ireland, about the middle of the last century, were favoured with a very signal out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, giving them remarkably clear views, not only of particular articles of revealed truth, but of the system of it in general. Of this the Confession of Faith, Larger and Shorter Catechisms, the Form of Church Government, and the Directory for Public Worship, agreed on by the Westminster Assembly, are lasting monuments. Nor is the oath of God, into which the multitude of church-members, in Britain and Ireland, entered, ever to be forgotten.

2. It was more especially the concern of our reforming ancestors in that period, to attain purity of worship, and to bear an ample testimony against all those human devices by which it had been corrupted.

3. Presbyterians, in the last century, appear to have been unanimous in their opposition to the singing of hymns of human composition in solemn worship, which was then practised by various sects.*

Though our ancestors were far from pretending to be infallible, yet we should not lightly charge them with actual

* In Hornius's Ecclesiastical History there is a list of the errors that began to be propagated in England about the year 1645; among which we find the following: "That the sacred songs and psalms of David ought not now to be sung; and that the songs which christians ought to use are hymns of their own composition." See Manton's commentary on James v. 13.

ual error. Now either they who took the ſinging of the book of pſalms for ſuitable New Teſtament worſhip, or their opponents who reckon it ceremonial and antiquated, muſt have been chargeable with error and deluſion. With whom the deluſion was, we may know by a diligent and impartial attention to the Lord's word, accompanied with prayer; for deluſion may be known by ſuch marks as the following: 1. The want of an zealous regard to the truths of God on account of their having the ſtamp of his authority, 2 Theſſ. ii. 10. 11. Rev. iii. 16. 2. Fondneſs for novelty, or ſomething to tickle the ear and engage the fancy in matters of religion, 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4. Deut. xxxii. 17. 3. Men's proud conceit of their own underſtanding and righteouſneſs, diſpoſing them to treat any plain and explicit teſtimony againſt their corruptions with contempt, and to repreſent thoſe who adhere to ſuch a teſtimony as a ſect unworthy of notice, John. vii. 46, 47, 48. Acts xxii. 21, 22. Luke xix. 6. 7. Neh. iv. 1, 2. 4. Indifference and inattention to what is, eſpecially, preſent duty, Matth. xvi. 3. Iſai. xxii. 12, 13. Luke xix. 41. 42. 5. Taking up with their own thoughts, imaginations, or reaſoning, as their rule in matters of religion, Prov. xiv. 12. Deut. xii. 8. Judges xxi. 25. Iſai. lxv. 2. viii. 20. 6. An obſtinate rejection of the truth, under a pretence of the want of evidence, while they diſregard that which is offered, Jer. xliv. 15, 16, 17. Hoſea iv. 17. John. xi. 47, 48, 53. x. 24. ii. 18. 7. Boaſting of light and other ſpiritual gifts, Rev. iii. 17. 1 Kings xxii. 24. 8. Deep ſecurity, Jerem. vi. 14. 1 Theſ. v. 3. Iſai xxix. 10.

Of

Of the Rules for Interpreting Scripture.

Let us propheſy according to the proportion [or analogy] of faith.
Epiſtle to the Romans.

IT is obſerved in a Diſcourſe on Singing Pſalms, that if the literal ſenſe of a paſſage of ſcripture be contrary to the current of ſcripture-doctrine; if it be trivial, affording no ſpiritual or practical inſtruction; if it be unſuitable to the ſcope and connexion of the place; then it is neceſſary to depart from the literal ſenſe.

To this paſſage the following objection has been made: "This is not the rule by which we may know when a paſſage is to be taken figuratively: but the rule is this, "when the literal ſenſe would involve an abſurdity, we "muſt conclude it is figurative; and alſo when the ſcripture itſelf diſcovers any particular paſſage to be ſo. "There are ſome ſcripture paſſages which have what may "be called a double ſenſe."*

ANSWER. Some have defined the literal ſenſe to be, that which the Holy Spirit firſt intended to ſignify by the words, whether they be uſed in the ſimple grammatical ſenſe or figuratively. This is indeed the only true ſignification of the words of ſcripture, from which we are never to depart. But here, in ſpeaking of the literal ſenſe, we mean that ſenſe only which the words of a paſſage obviouſly bear, being taken grammatically, or according to the letter; as contra-diſtinguiſhed from the ſenſe in which ſome paſſages or expreſſions are to be taken, according to the rules of figurative language. The queſtion then is, when a particular paſſage is to be taken in a literal, and when in a figurative ſenſe. This being premiſed, we offer the following obſervations on the ſubject:

1. What the objector lays down as a rule, may, and indeed ought to be underſtood in a ſenſe perfectly agreeable to

* An Examination, &c. pag. 55. 58.

to what was said in the Discourse: Because all the things there specified, as rendering it necessary to take a passage of scripture in a figurative sense, are such as involve great absurdity. For it is a great absurdity to suppose that the scripture contradicts itself. But this is manifestly the case, if a text be supposed to contain a sense contrary to the current doctrine of scripture. Nor is it less certainly the case, if it be supposed, that there is nothing contained in the sense of a text that is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, or for instruction in righteousness; since the scripture itself declares, that *all scripture is given by inspiration*, and *is profitable* for these purposes; and that *whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learning, that we thro' patience and comfort of the scripture might have hope*, 2 Tim. iii. 16. Rom. xv. 4. Some can see little or no instruction in the account of Sampson's collection of so many foxes. But there is no necessity here to depart from the literal sense for want of instruction; since the connexion of it with Sampson's just resentment, and the consequent overthrow of the enemies of God's people, is abundantly instructive, and affords rich matter of meditation.* Nor is it necessary, for the sake of instruction, to depart from the literal sense of the list that is given of the dukes of Edom; for these are a cloud of witnesses to the fulfilment of the promises of temporal benefits which had been made to Esau. And as the Edomites are represented as in a flourishing condition, while the chosen people of God were in a state of poverty and oppression: hence we learn, that we are not to think it strange to see the ungodly getting their good things, while the godly are in adversity. To give one instance more; some can find no instruction in the mention of twenty-nine knives, among the vessels of the house of the Lord brought back from Babylon, Ezra i. 9. But surely the particular account which we have of these vessels and utensils, is intended to point out the special care, and particular providence of God exercised about the concerns of his worship, and the accomplishment of a remarkable prophecy, Jer. xxvii. 21, 22. *The vessels that remain in the house of the Lord shall be carried to Babylon, and there shall they be until the day that I visit them,*

* See Bishop Hall's contemplation on this part of sacred history.

them, saith the Lord; then will I bring up and restore them to their place. We may sometimes not readily apprehend the instruction contained in a particular passage of scripture; but to conclude there is none in it, is rash, blasphemous, and absurd. If at first we can see little or no instruction in a text considered by itself, let us attend to its connexion with, and dependence on what comes before, or what follows, and we shall hardly fail to see something of the propriety and usefulness of it: And supposing we should not be able to see so much, if we have a due reverence of the scriptures, we will believe there is, in many passages of scripture, precious instruction, which, as yet, we have never apprehended.* But farther, it is absurd to suppose, that a text may be taken in a sense unsuitable to the scope and circumstances of it. For an exposition of any part of a discourse, which is not suitable to the purpose of the writer, and has no coherence with what goes before or with what follows, must be either foreign to the mind of the writer, or must prove his discourse to be impertinent and ridiculous. It is an ancient rule of interpretation, that the true sense of any passage in any discourse, is to be gathered from antecedents and consequents.

2. But by what is absurd, the objector seems to mean something different from and previous to the consideration of the analogy of faith, or the scope and circumstances of the

* With regard to having recourse to the supposition of a figure or allegory, where it is difficult (we cannot, consistently with the end for which the whole scripture was given, allow it ever to be impossible) to find the meaning of a passage, *where the structure of its sentences may be perplexed, the terms ambiguous, or where it may refer to customs and facts with which we are unacquainted, or the subject may be beyond our comprehension, &c.* We are in such cases, to acknowledge our ignorance; and that we are in no condition to determine whether such a text ought to be understood literally, or figuratively. In such a case, we may venture to say, that the rash attempt of some learned men, to accommodate the literal sense of texts to their apprehensions, by pretended emendations of the text, and by artful criticism, have done as much harm to the church of God, as the most obviously impertinent attempts of others to find allegories and mystical meanings in such parts of scripture.

* An Examination, &c. pag. 56.

the text: " For," says he, " you must first determine by " another rule, whether the text be really literal or figura- " tive: and having determined this, then the sense must be " regulated by the analogy of faith, or the scope of the " place, or both." So that the absurdity he means is not what arises from inconsistency with what is plainly the doctrine of the bible, or with the manifest design of the Holy Spirit in such a passage; but inconsistency with his natural reason and pre-conceived opinion. Here we certainly differ from him. For, in the *first* place, though the literal sense of a passage or expression, taken by itself, or without regard to the context, be consistent with reason or common sense, yet it will not always follow, that it is not to be taken figuratively. It is necessary to understand the following passages figuratively, though there is nothing in the literal or grammatical sense of them that is inconsistent with reason or common sense; Song ii. 12. *Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.* John xii. 4. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall unto the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth fruit.* xi. 9. *Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbled not, because he seeth the light of the world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.* Upon the principle of the objector (namely, if a passage of scripture can, by any means, bear a literal meaning consistent with reason and common sense, it must be taken literally) the Socinians proceed, when they deny the allegorical and spiritual meaning of the Song of Solomon; representing that part of the sacred scriptures as an Eclogue, like those of Theocritus and Virgil; in which Solomon, in the character of a shepherd, sings his love of Pharoah's daughter; a supposition, however, which has been shewn to be as contrary to the history of the bible, as it is to the supernatural and spiritual design of it. In the *second* place, it is most dangerous to conclude, that the literal sense of the text involves an absurdity, previous to the consideration of the analogy of faith and the circumstances of the text; and, upon the footing of such a conclusion, to determine that the text is to be taken figuratively. This is the very

very courſe that Socinians take with thoſe texts which, literally underſtood, ſet forth the vicarious nature of the death Chriſt. Hence they ſay, that redemption by the blood of of Chriſt, is not a proper, but only a figurative or metaphorical redemption; and the true reaſon of the aſſertion is, that they have already concluded, that a proper redemption by a ſatisfaction to divine juſtice is impoſſible and abſurd. In the ſame manner, they conſider themſelves under a neceſſity of taking all the places of ſcripture, in which Chriſt is called God, in an improper and figurative ſenſe; as when angels or civil magiſtrates are ſo called.

To prevent miſconſtruction, we may add, that it is not here meant, that there can be any thing really abſurd or contradictory to right reaſon in the ſenſe of ſcripture; but that when we meet with a paſſage that appears ſo to us, we ſhould conclude, not that we are to underſtand it figuratively; but rather, that it ſets forth ſome myſtery, which is above the ſphere of our reaſon, or that we do not as yet underſtand it: In which caſe it muſt be the height of raſhneſs to determine how the words are to be taken, till we have examined them more cloſely, or, till we have conſidered their connexion with what goes before and with what follows; and have compared them with other paſſages that relate to the ſame ſubject.

3. What the objector ſays, about ſome paſſages of ſcripture having a double meaning, is very exceptionable. For while he tells us, that the only rule for determining what paſſages have this double ſenſe, is, "the diſcoveries of the "mind of God in them by his inſpired meſſengers;"* what he ſays implies, that a perſon may have a juſt view of the whole ſenſe of a particular paſſage, according to the ſcope and connexion of the place where it is; and yet the ſame paſſage may have a quite different ſenſe put upon it by an inſpired meſſenger. The objector ſeems herein to agree with the Papiſts, who hold, that different co-ordinate ſenſes may juſtly be put upon the ſame words of ſcripture. With many orthodox divines, we judge the true ſenſe of ſcripture to be one only, for ſuch reaſons as the following:

Firſt, the ſcheme of the ſcriptures having more co-ordinate ſenſes than one, has no foundation in the ſcripture

* An Examination, &c. pag. 58.

itself. Bellarmine and other Popish doctors, produce various places of scripture, which, they say, are to be taken literally in the Old Testament, and yet are explained in a spiritual and mystical sense in the New: Such as those places which speak of the coming of the Israelites out of Egypt, of their passage through the Red sea, of the manna, of the water that came out of the rock, and the like. With our divines, we answer, that in some places of the New Testament, where they pretend, that a new sense is put upon some places of the Old Testament, there is no such thing; there is only an accommodation of the words, to express or illustrate a subject, to which something that is meant by the words in the place where they are found in the Old Testament, is in some respect analogous or parallel. There seems to be such an accomodation of the following expression in the nineteenth Psalm, *Their words to the world's end*, in Rom. x. 18. Nor do we deny, that there are in scripture many allegories, that is, continued metaphors, and various types, that is, not only words signifying things, but things signifying other things. But with regard to such passages, we observe, that the literal and the spiritual significations of them, do not properly constitute two co-ordinate senses, but two parts of one and the same comprehensive sense.

Secondly, If a passage had two co-ordinate senses, it could not be understood according to the known rules of human speech, namely, those delivered in logic, rhetorick, or grammar. But it is contrary to the perspicuity of scripture (than which there is no other property of it more certain) to say, that any part of it cannot be understood according to the known rules of human speech; since God speaks in his word in condescension to our capacity, and in order to be understood. We allow, that unregenerate men do not rightly apprehend spiritual things, according to the representation of them in the word: but that is not at all owing to any obscurity or ambiguity in the manner of expressing these things; but to the unsuitableness of the spiritual and sublime nature of the things expressed to their natural apprehensions. The words are the fittest that human language could afford, for expressing those things; and all their commentaries and discourses on them are no farther to be valued, than as they serve to point out that fitness, and to direct our attention to it. It must

muſt alſo be owned, that we experience an obſcurity in the typical and allegorical parts of ſcripture; which ariſe from our want of the knowledge of what is truly ſignified by the words or typical things; a knowledge which never could be ſaid to be abſolutely unattainable; or from our over-looking ſome of the numerous circumſtances that are often neceſſary to be attended to, in order to the right underſtanding of ſuch paſſages.

Laſtly, we cannot conceive, that our Lord and his apoſtles, in arguing with the Jews and others, from paſſages in the Old Teſtament, underſtood theſe paſſages otherwiſe than according to the common rules of logic, grammar, or rhetoric; that is, they took them in a ſenſe, which the people they had to deal with, were obliged to acknowledge to be the true one.

Objection. How does it agree with this doctrine concerning the unity of the ſenſe of ſcripture, to make the ſacrifices under the law both typify the death of Chriſt, and repreſent the ſervices of believers?

Answer. The death of Chriſt was, in a primary and proper ſenſe, a ſacrifice to ſatisfy divine juſtice, and by the offering of ſacrifices under the Old Teſtament it was ſhadowed forth as not yet accompliſhed. But this is no way inconſiſtent with the conſideration of the act of believers, in bringing or preſenting theſe ſacrifices, as on their part an inſtance of obedience. For though the offering of ſacrifices, in the peculiar conſideration of it, as an inſtitution of the ceremonial law, was purely typical, *a ſhadow of good things to come*; yet in the more general conſideration of it, as an inſtance of obedience to God's command, it was of the ſame nature with any other part of the religious worſhip required by the moral law. The offerer of a ſacrifice, ſo far as he was rightly exerciſed, acted faith in the death of Chriſt, as the ſole ground of his pardon and acceptance with God; he made the revealed will of God the only rule and reaſon of his obedience, and ſolemnly dedicated himſelf and all he had unto God. The offering of ſacrifices, being thus conſidered in a moral view, as an inſtance of acceptable ſervice to God, is fitly made uſe of in ſcripture to expreſs the ſervice of believers in general. We do not mean, that it typifies thoſe ſervices, but that it ſerves to expreſs or repreſent them, juſt

as,

as, in Jer. viii. the ſtork, the crane, the ſwallow, repreſent all the birds of each of theſe ſpecies; and as in Iſai. ii. 4. the ceaſing of the uſe of ſwords and ſpears, repreſents the ceaſing of military operations in general. So here, there are not two different ſenſes; but, as it is frequently the caſe, one ſenſe comprehending two things; namely, the ceremonial inſtitution typifying the death of Chriſt; and the moral and ſpiritual ſervice of the offerer, ſerving to repreſent or expreſs other inſtances of acceptable obedience. So it is uſed to expreſs prayer, Pſal. cxli. 2. offices of charity, Heb. xiii. 15. godly ſorrow for ſin, Pſal. li. 17.

Of the Duty of Electing Perſons who profeſs the true Religion, to Civil Offices.

The people, conſidered in their political capacity, ſhould, by their deed of civil conſtitution provide, &c.

AS the following queſtion has been muſt agitated of late, ſo, it is hoped, a few hints concerning it will not be deemed improper.

The queſtion is, Whether a people, in their political capacity, may provide, by their deed of civil conſtitution, that no other ſhall be choſen to occupy places of eminent power and truſt, than ſuch as make a credible profeſſion of their willingneſs to concur in the true religion and reformation?

In handling this queſtion, it is neceſſary, indeed, to be explicit in declaring the diſtinction between church and ſtate; the one being of a ſpiritual, the other of a temporal nature; they having no right to interfere with one another, in the exerciſe of their reſpective authorities.

But it ſeems to imply no ſuch interference, nor to be any way inconſiſtent with ſcripture or reaſon, for a people to agree

gree among themselves, that they may promote none to the magistracy but such as make a profession of sound religious principles. This agreement of the people being all that can be meant by their deed of civil constitution in the question, the making of such a deed seems to be no more than a plain scriptural duty.

A christian, in choosing, for example, a representative in the legislature of the state, ought to attend to the religious, as well as to the political character of a candidate. He ought to honour such as fear the Lord, Psal. xv. 4. and he may declare his resolution to do so. Now, why may not a civil society make the same declaration? What may warrantably be done by one person in his political capacity, may be done by a civil society. It is as competent for a society to declare of what description they will choose persons to a civil office, as it is for an individual to do so. Some affect to distinguish between the people's declaring a certain class of men eligible or ineligible to a certain office, and their declaring, that they will actually choose or refuse them. But what is meant by a society's declaring a person eligible or ineligible to an office, but the declaration of their will to choose or refuse him? Now, a society's declared will to choose, is so much the same with its actually choosing, that the difference between them (at least as it affects the present question) is too fine and subtile to be discerned by common capacities. The preference thus given to person's professing sound religious principles, is no infringement of any man's right; it touches neither his personal liberty, nor his conscience, nor his simple reputation. As for that eminent reputation,† upon which the choice of persons to public offices is supposed to proceed, it cannot be extorted; it is voluntarily given or with held; as not being among the natural unalienable rights of mankind.

The question, then, is merely, whether a civil society has a right to choose men of such a description, or not? The state of the question is quite altered, when it is supposed to be about

† Puffendorf in his treatise *De Officio Hominis et Civis*, Book ii. Chap. 14 enumerates intensive or eminent reputation among the imperfect rights, that is, rights which cannot be vindicated by force or legal prosecution. Existimationem intensivam si quis aliis etiam bene meritis denegaverit, non injuriam facit; sed duntaxat ob inhumanitatem et velut incivilitatem male audit.

bout an impoſing or compelling power exerciſed towards any member of civil ſociety. For, in ſimple election, there is no juriſdiction, or exerciſe of magiſterial power at all.

The ſacramental teſt in England is juſtly conſidered as a grievance; becauſe it occaſions not only an impious proſtitution of the Lord's ſupper, but alſo, as it is managed there, a contemptuous diſregard of the moſt proper evidences of a pious diſpoſition in candidates for civil offices; and becauſe it is manifeſtly deſigned for the ſupport of an oppreſſive hierarchy.

But it is urged, that this is a blending of civil and religious matters. The difficulty of anſwering this objection lies in aſcertaining its meaning. Does it mean, that hereby the people do ſomething in their civil capacity, which they ought to do as church-members only? This cannot be pretended; becauſe they do nothing but what it is allowed each of them may do as an individual, even in his civil capacity. Does it mean, that religion, by the reſolution ſuppoſed, is made a condition of men's enjoying the natural rights of citizens? Neither can this be pretended; becauſe the reſolution in queſtion is only the will of the majority of the ſociety to chooſe ſuch a one to a civil office, to which no one has a natural right. Does it mean, that the ſuppoſed reſolution would lead individuals to the diſowning of magiſtrates, who had not religious qualifications? This cannot be ſaid with any colour of reaſon; becauſe the ſuppoſed reſolution is here conſidered as what is competent to the majority only of the ſociety: We owe allegiance to whatever magiſtrates are ſet up by the majority, though they ſhould not be ſuch as we would chooſe. Or, laſtly, does it mean, that we ought not to conſider the intereſt of Chriſt in the management of our civil affairs; ſo as to order the latter in ſubordination and ſubſervience to the former: This is what no chriſtian dare ſay. We are to acknowledge the Lord in all our ways, and, in every capacity.

Some may perhaps object, that the expreſſion, "magiſtrates "ſhould be obliged to concur in religion and reformation," ſeems to imply more than merely the election of religious perſons to be magiſtrates. We anſwer, that ſuch language had come into common uſe, from the notion that has much prevailed about the hereditary right of ſuch as have been once admitted to be magiſtrates. But the truth is, neither has any

man

man a perfect right of obliging a civil ſociety to make him their magiſtrate, or to continue him as ſuch; nor has any civil ſociety a perfect right of obliging him to be or continue their magiſtrate: And therefore the ſenſe of the expreſſion muſt be, that the civil ſociety ſhould agree to chooſe unto, or continue in the magiſtracy, no other than ſuch as give proper evidence of their willingneſs to concur in religion and reformation; that evidence being made the condition upon which they are to hold their office. The expreſſion in queſtion, as uſed by the Aſſociate Preſbytery, cannot be underſtood otherwiſe than as now explained, conſiſtently with their declaration, "that thoſe "only do properly fall under the denomination of magiſtrates "who are in the poſſeſſion and exerciſe of magiſtracy by "the will and conſent of the civil ſociety."

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